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ABSTRACT

The 16 articles in this journal issue deal with women's studies within the English curriculum. Topics discussed in the articles include (1) the feminist challenge to the male-centered curriculum in higher education; (2) the women's movement and women's studies; (3) connotations of the word "girl"; (4) women in English education; (5) the new honesty in fiction by women; (6) Emily Dickinson's legacy to Susan Glaspell; (7) gender traps in Toni Morrison's "Sula"; (8) marital relationships in the Corpus Christi Cycles; (9) Theresa, Persis, and Mary Giles, pioneers in women's higher education; and (10) the personality characteristics of creative men and women. (FL)

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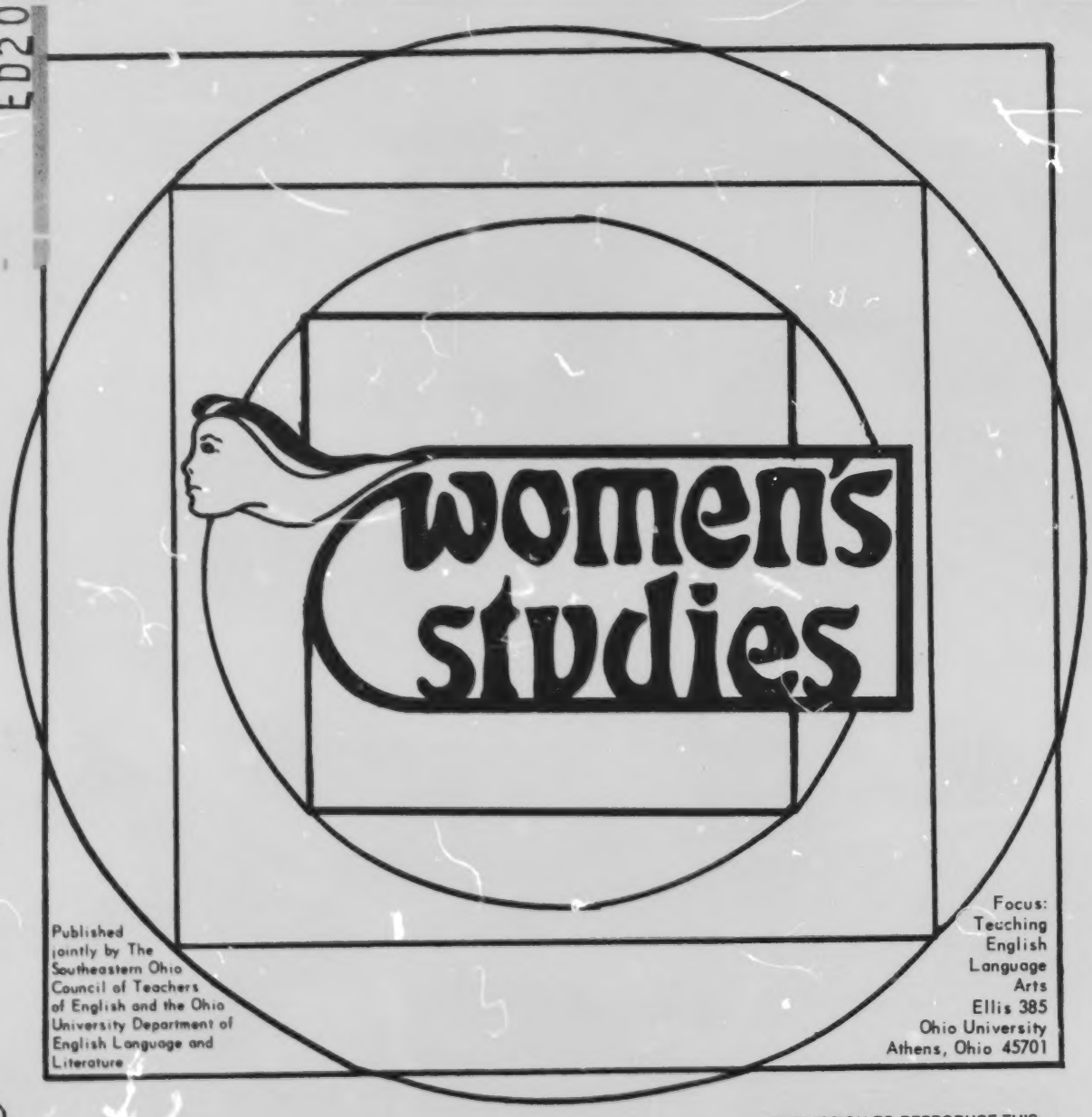

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Volume VIII FALL 1981 Number 1

WOMEN'S STUDIES

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INTRODUCTION

Woman's Studies Scholars: Committed Optimists

by
Marilyn Judith Atlas
Director of Women's Studies
Ohio University

As I look over the essays in this Women's Studies issue of Focus, I am cheered by their hopefullness. I am reminded how I felt when I read Carolyn Heilburn's most recent book, Reinventing Womanhood, in which she suggests that women be courageous enough to go past the failures of our divided culture and imagine a wholeness that can heal and shape our lives. Heilburn ends this book strongly and sensibly: "The past is male. But it is all the past we have. We must use it, in order that the future will speak of womanhood, a condition full of risk, and variety, and discovery: in short human."

The essays in this issue of Focus feel very human to me, both brave and diverse: women and men are addressed; women and men are studied. Consistently, these essays insist, to use Adrienne Rich's metaphor, that women are not the dragon that must be slain, but rather that the fear of women is the monster that is distorting our lives.

Alison Prindle's essay, "Male Norms, Women's Lives: Adam's Rib and the Academy," begins the journal appropriately asserting that the feminist challenge to the male-centered curriculum is the most exciting question for our academic discipline. Prindle insists that revision of the curriculum using our new perspectives and information is essential. Nancy McHugh's essay, "Invisible Woman," discusses this issue from an English education point of view arguing that awareness, affirmative action, and balance are central responsibilities of English education and that we must revise the English curriculum accordingly.

The struggle for new viewpoints and knowledge intermingled with a refusal to remain divided into "feminine" and "masculine" halves colors each essay. Regardless of the stark reality of some research findings there is in each essay an underlying layer of optimism. Gail Bossert Klink, for instance, in "Whine, Women, and Song," reviews three hundred years of song lyrics and finds that our culture is circling around false issues, but she manages not to become embittered by the unhealthy patterning she sees. Rebecca Neff, in her essay, "The New Honesty in Women's Fiction," discusses the directness from which modern women write fiction; certainly these essays parallel that movement.

In her charmingly witty essay, "The Marchesa and Ligea: Possibly Poe's Parodies?" Sara Culver adds another touch of honest and positive perception. Culver examines the absurdity of Poe's treatment of women concluding that

his portrayal reflects more than gothic tradition; rather it reflects a spoof on women. The optimistic implications of Culver's argument is that in the twentieth century we are more able to perceive the possibility of parody because we are further from the stereotype of consumptive ladies.

This issue of Focus stands as one more symbol that there are many among us who are committed to the future of feminist inquiry and that we are unwilling to let go of our constantly new visions even in the 1980's when we are rather consistently being bombarded with feminist losses: the Women's Education Equity Act is all but dead; the Equal Rights Amendment seems unlikely to pass; the charitable foundations such as Ford, Carnegie, and Mellon who were helping support feminist scholarship during the last decade seem to have lost interest in it; and the Women's Studies programs which were so optimistically created throughout the country remain blatantly underfunded and understaffed.

This issue of Focus pleases me because it analyzes our position, our history, and our pain with intelligence that is neither numbed nor subservient; because it shows that feminists continue to move creatively and to affirm the necessity of journeying.

Male Norms, Women's Lives: Adam's Rib and the Academy

by
Alison H. Prindle

Whether we are males or females, the most exciting questions for our academic disciplines--and ourselves--today come from the feminist challenge to the historically male-centered curriculum of higher education.* Florence Howe has said, and I repeat with her, as you read this and as I write it, we participate in a major historical revolution. The Copernican revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries shifted Western European culture out of assumptions about geocentricity. Darwin in the nineteenth challenged our assumptions about the centricity of the human species. The twentieth century has made Western Europe reconsider its ethnocentricity. Now, under the pressure of feminism, economics and birth control, the adequacy of androcentricity as the dominant cultural and historical, as well as sociopolitical, perspective is at issue. Like all revolutions, this one will not be over and done with as soon as either its supporters or its opponents wish. Its implications are both stimulating and uncomfortable; part of my objective here is to stimulate, part to make all of us uncomfortable.

My first premise is that all of us in academe need to re-examine the received tradition and its content, the kinds of questions we ask about our disciplines, and the bases and perspective of those disciplines. My second is that all of these, in my discipline and classroom as well as yours, are profoundly biased by a male-dominant perspective. My third is that this bias limits, to greater or lesser degrees depending on our disciplines, our claims to be pursuing truth and our efforts to be good teachers.

I'd like to use a poem, a prose poem by Muriel Rukeyser, to provide the image for the feminist re-examination of the curriculum. The poem is entitled "Myth," a title appropriate for my purposes as well as Rukeyser's. The

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*What follows began as introductory remarks for the Integrative Studies Faculty Seminar, December 1980. It has been revised slightly, to include references to some of the subsequent presentations in the seminar, and to make an essentially oral presentation more orderly on the printed page. Participants in the seminar were encouraged to read the following articles, some of which are referred to directly in my discussion here: Carol Gilligan, "Woman's Place in Man's Life Cycle," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Nov. 1979), pp. 441-446; Florence Howe, "Three Missions of Higher Education for Women: Vocation, Freedom, Knowledge," Liberal Education, Vol. 66, No. 3 (Fall, 1980), pp. 285-297; Elizabeth Minnich, "Friends and Critics; The Feminist Academy," Toward a Feminist Transformation of the Academy: Proceedings of the Fifth Annual GLCA Women's Studies Conference, Nov. 2-4, 1979; Adrienne Rich, "Toward a Woman-Centered University" (orig. 1973-4), in On Lies, Secrets, and Silence: Selected Prose 1966-78 (N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 1979), pp. 125-55.

particular myth of the poem is the story of Oedipus, King of Thebes, who killed his father and married his mother, ignorant of their identity and his own, and who, then, according to Sophocles, found out what he had done. Self-blinded, banished from his homeland, Oedipus wandered as an outcast and beggar, assisted only by his daughters, until his death at Colonus won for him some refuge and acceptance by the gods. Rukeyser takes up the story with Oedipus in the midst of his blind wandering. She refers us back to the Sphinx, woman-beast, whose power and riddle had held Thebes in bondage until that riddle was answered by the young Oedipus. Sophocles' famous play interprets the myth as an experience of human limitation, of lives patterned for destruction despite our best intentions, and of the human will to pursue and know the truth about oneself, no matter the cost. Rukeyser's point is a slightly different one:

"Myth"

> Long afterward, Oedipus, old and blinded, walked the roads. He smelled a familiar smell. It was the Sphinx. Oedipus said, "I want to ask one question. Why didn't I recognize my mother?" "You gave the wrong answer," said the Sphinx. "But that was what made everything possible," said Oedipus. "No," she said. "When I asked, What walks on four legs in the morning, two at noon, and three in the evening, you answered, Man. You didn't say anything about woman." "When you say Man," said Oedipus, "you include women too. Everyone knows that." She said, "That's what you think."[1]

In addition to allowing a voice to the Sphinx, to the other side of the riddle story, and expressing in that voice an enigmatic, hostile glee at catching the great rational mind up short, the poem says directly that Oedipus' "right" (linguistically correct) answer was wrong. It implies too that the tragedy might have been averted; much feminist energy today comes from a similar, sustaining idealism. Oedipus didn't recognize his mother. What in fact have any of us learned about our cultural foremothers in our graduate and undergraduate training in the past? Oedipus' unexamined androcentricity cut him off from a source of his own identity, from an intimate part of himself. "When you say Man, you include woman too. Everybody knows that." Oedipus assumed that knowing man he would automatically know woman as well. Because he thought he didn't have to think about gender, he missed knowing who he was until harm beyond measure was done. Rukeyser's poem suggests we have to re-examine the answers we've given in the past to our riddles at a basic level: in the words we choose to use.[2] Many groups have contributed to the formal language of the past, but every indication is that "everybody" really means, in standard written speech, then and now, the dominant class whose control of institutions (like education and government) has made possible the perpetuation of their "everybody" as the standard category of knowledge. Would those we assume are included in our answers themselves feel included? What are the consequences of this conscious or inadvertent exclusion for our answers?

There is another point Oedipus tries to make in Rukeyser's telling: "But

that was what made everything possible." Our answers, his answer, have made the past. If the past is that of a patriarchal culture, or a male-dominated culture, or a white male European culture, it is nevertheless a rich and complex past, as all of our disciplines attest to. The past has created the educational structure we know; it has made our disciplines and, by and large, it has made us. How are we, as persons or as educators, to dispense with it utterly? Should we not merely add a new chapter rather than attempting to revise the model of the past which we have inherited?

I think we need not throw all away. But I think our approach needs to be radical, in the etymological sense of getting at the roots of the answers we unriddlers have given and the "possibilities" they have produced.

One reason is our students, both male and female, who have the right to recognize their foremothers. The traditional content and questions may seem to all of us to be open-ended and speculative, because we are in charge of them. They are more likely to be perceived by our students as prescriptive patterns: the way culture is and has been is the privileged knowledge they are here to memorize, learn, inherit from us. The title of the collection of books on women that I've put together for the Otterbein library is "Adam's Rib: Women's Lives." The reaction to it from colleagues has been interesting. Though it could be taken as merely descriptive of the definition traditionally accorded to women in our culture, it almost invariably meets with irritation, because it suggests (as every culture does suggest about its myths) that the words prescribe truth rather than describe situations. Have we perhaps done the same thing in our disciplines: willingly or inadvertently prescribed, or allowed others to see as prescriptive, an image of the world as white and male? Merely to add another chapter doesn't meet this problem honestly. Did "everyone" agree with what we "meant" when we called the Integrative Studies course Studies in the Nature of Man?[3]

There is another reason for a radical approach to our disciplines. If we follow Rukeyser's point, we ought to be asking of our classes and our disciplines: why have we accepted/given that answer? (Obviously "everybody knows that" is never a response we think of ourselves of tolerating; it may be hardest to see ourselves making that response in matters of gender and race.) We ought to be asking: what's been left out in this answer; who can't be recognized by this approach? And these must be assessed as serious questions, for our own sakes. Let me offer in evidence here a piece of literary criticism by Lionel Trilling, a critic I have learned from and respect deeply. It is taken from some introductory lectures on literature for the beginner--the most vulnerable of audiences. The problematic of our inherited disciplines, as feminism would see it, is raised in another way by Trilling's words. He has been arguing that when we read a piece of literature we do bring to the poem our knowledge of the writer as a person: that this is inevitable and necessary. Feminist critics, who argue that gender is a bias in all of our work, and that it is part of the writer as well as of the writer's world, would so far agree. As Trilling says, Milton's youthful poem, "Lycidas," on fears about whether the poet's own work will be recognized, has greater resonance because Milton later became a great poet; our knowledge of Keats' and Wordsworth's ideas in the whole body of their work helps us as we read individual poems. And, says Trilling, Emily Dickinson is another case in point. Her poem, "'Go Tell It'--What a Message," is about the messenger charged with

reporting the Greek defeat by the Persians at Thermophylae in 480 B.C., a classical paradigm of heroic will to resist. Here is the poem:

> "Go tell it"--What a Message--
> To whom--is specified--
> Not murmur--not endearment--
> But simply--we--obeyed--
> Obeyed--a Lure--a Longing?
> Oh Nature--none of this--
> To Law--said sweet Thermopylae
> I give my dying kiss.[4]

It is not an easy poem; Dickinson's simplicity of diction is always deceptive. Here is Trilling's opening comment:

> And in the case of Emily Dickinson's striking little poem, there is at least one personal fact about the author which it is essential we bring to our reading--that the poet is a woman. If we were not aware of this, we might well be made uncomfortable by the poem, for its tone and diction seem appropriate to a woman but not to a man, and we would surely be ill at ease if we thought a man had been the writer.[5]

The condescension in the passage becomes clearer as Trilling continues, but even here a scholar-critic might wonder why this poem is called a "striking little poem," when all of Dickinson's lyrics are short by the standards of her male, classically trained predecessors, but not by the standard of twentieth century contemporary verse. As a woman, I wonder why it did not matter to note that Milton was a man, not a woman: this fact affects his verse, its tone and ideology as much as Dickinson's gender affects hers, if not more. The unexamined assumptions lie behind Trilling's pronouns: we might be uncomfortable, we might be ill at ease. I am not made ill at ease by Dickinson, and I do not have to make it clear that she is "other" than I, in order to be able to approach her. Not all the persons who read or will read her poems are male, yet Trilling's androcentricity allows him to speak as if they were. And I would submit that even if his original audience of college students was all male at Columbia, his remarks remain problematic; he has not simply made a practical adjustment to his audience. Trilling's passage continues and demonstrates yet more clearly what feminists protest in the traditional uses of gender categorization.

> The poem is, as it were, based upon the femininity of the poet. The word femininity is never used in a neutral sense but always with the intention of praise; it connotes charm, delicacy, tenderness. These qualities are no doubt readily seen, or heard, in the poem, but they will be the more quickly perceived by the reader who has some previous acquaintance with Emily Dickinson's work and knows the extent to which the poet represents herself in the postures of femininity, as a young woman, or girl, of high sensitivity, delicate, fastidious, quick to be apprehensive yet courageous and even daring, standing in a daughterly relation to God, whom, on

> one occasion, with the licensed audacity of rebelliousness characteristic of her manner, she addresses as "Papa above." The rules of the world are laid down by masculine beings and the point of many of her poems lies, as in the present one, in the opposition of the feminine creature to the masculine authority, which usually delights her even though she addresses it in irony or protest.[6]

Wouldn't it have been better not to know that Dickinson was a woman, the female critic might ask at this point? Categorizing her as a woman has transformed her with startling speed into a charming little girl. Trilling is usually an admirable critic, and I say that with full sincerity: I have learned much about great literature from him. However, by his assumptions about "femininity" (male assumptions about the definition of the other sex), by his assumptions about Dickinson's relationship to the male authority ("usually delights her"), by his statement that "the rules of the world are laid down by masculine beings" (notice that it is unclear from his sentence whether this is his position or merely a description of Dickinson's nineteenth century, New England, personal milieu), Trilling traps himself (and his reader) and becomes a lesser critic. Dickinson is not a charming little girl playing a poetic game; she is not the good little daughter pretending to a rebellion that poses no real threat. She is a poet, adult, of deadly seriousness and extraordinary metaphysical range. By his language, Trilling authorizes his audience to take her work as appealing, charming, "even daring" in the manner of children pretending to importance, but not as a serious and difficult achievement.[7]

Having 'answered' the Sphinx's riddle, Oedipus married Jocasta who was part of his acquisition of power as King of Thebes. Trilling makes Dickinson into a little girl, not a poet, and inadvertently associates himself with a remote, but charmable "papa God." He would be, he says, uncomfortable if he had to deal with her poem as anything but delicate, tender, and playful, though his critical mind tries to tell him that her major subject is her opposition to a male dominant world and her need to survive with her own vision intact, unviolated. This is not a tender, delicate, or playful subject. In fact Trilling's discomfort probably stems from Dickinson's own poetic strategies for challenging the omnipresent male authority.[8] But his cultural option--of assuming a male 'superiority' and distance--proves corrupting, and he does not permit himself to confront the work of Dickinson as honestly as he might, for example, confront Milton or Keats. Nor does he say, as he might, that his imaginative access to Dickinson's world is blocked by his own 'male' responses, a situation which I, as a woman critic, find and acknowledge with John Milton's work.

It is not enough, then, in response to the statement, "when you say men, you include woman too," to say, no, men and women differ. One must also say, there is no hierarchy of values which, a priori and in instances unexamined, makes one gender or the other superior. And it is not enough to say, with Trilling, that we can properly bring to what we read our knowledge of the person writing: we need bring also our self-knowledge, and awareness of our own gender perspective. Unacknowledged, that perspective can pre-empt full humanity for us. I am afraid that the "us" here is most likely to be a pronoun for the dominant group, which carefully refuses to see, does not even

recognize what can be seen, through the eyes of another gender, race or class. I have no desire to support an inversion of the patronizing distance from the opposite sex that I feel in this passage from Trilling. That would be to subscribe to the distorting and malign resource of "superiority" that clearly betrayed Oedipus, and Jocasta as well, trapped both Dickinson, who indeed had to play at femininity to survive, and Trilling, who could not allow himself to see what her poems say.

The first phase of the feminism of our generation has used such strategies of inversion to deny males any role but that of guilt and willful blindness in pursuit of power; it takes courage to fight against an entrenched pattern of thought and status, and the claim of superiority is one road to combative energies. The next wave of feminism may require enemies less than the previous one has. But I am not quite ready to believe that we ever do or should "tanscend" gender itself. It seems to me the claims for overcoming gender perspective in the past have been much exaggerated, particularly since subordinate groups have historically been asked to 'transcend' and see the world through the eyes of the dominant group, and the process was not reciprocal. I'd like to see a world where, to be human, we don't have to become not male or not female. To be female is to be human. To be male is to be human. To see our own perceptions distinctly we need self-knowledge that starts with gender and with what gender has meant in the daily texture of our lives, the historical relationships of which we are a part, and the future we'd like to claim. Trilling on Dickinson would, I claim, see more if he'd started by saying, as a man, I would be uncomfortable speaking in Dickinson's voice; is that because I feel this "feminine" diction would be shameful in me (and thus I would make her own achievement less) or because the poetry is designing a discomfort for me and drawing my attention to the 'feminine' struggle to live within the male-shaped world, or, perhaps, both?

Thus far, I'm proposing three forms of conscious self-questioning of our academic work: what's left out/who's left out, of the answer, the data, the picture, the story, the experiment? What does "everybody" know about it: particularly, what are the gender assumptions behind the material and words we use? And finally, who do we think we are, who are we addressing, who are we talking about: and what gender perspective is laced through these formal personae? I cannot rest with the sacred number three, and must suggest one more set of questions.

The Sphinx's riddle was about the pattern of human life: what goes on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three in the evening? The riddle is a kind of model. All of our disciplines work with models and paradigms--for structuring an argument, for developing an idea, for studying an issue, for acquiring information, for achieving success, for claiming truth. And we have models for professional accomplishment. One of the articles sent out to the original seminar participants, Carol Gilligan's "Woman's Place in Man's Life Cycle," takes its direction initially from what I think is a seminal feminist work, Nancy Chodorow's The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender.[9] Chodorow's work deals with a riddle: the origins of the gendered patterns of human behavior. Her line of argument, as summarized by Gilligan, goes something like this.

Like our traditional cultural patterns (Adam's rib, Eve and the apple), the traditional psychological patterns describing gender have seen females as deviant from a male centered norm (for Freud, lacking a penis). Freud specifically asserted an incomplete development of the superego in women. Thus, without the Oedipal stimulus for repression that males had, females retained infantile emotional ties to the mother and could not reach the highest plane of ethics and conceptions of justice. Chodorow challenges Freud's hierarchical language and perspective, saying instead that feminine personality, because of gender identity with the nurturant mother, defines itself in relationships, in closer connectedness to other persons, and possesses more flexible ego boundaries (her term). For the masculine personality, gender identity is bonded tightly to issues of differentiation and unlikeness; thus, the early, unconscious definition of self differs for males (separation) and females (attachment). It follows from Chodorow's model that the male gender identity will experience more threat from pressure for intimacy and relationships and those experiences will be secondary adult experiences; they will not come early in his adult development and he will not be prepared for them. Female gender identity will experience threat in separation and individuation (Freud's lack of sharp ego boundaries reunderstood), and these will be secondary adult experiences; she will not come early to them or be prepared for them.

The traditional studies (Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson, etc.) do not establish parallel lines as models for human development, but merge them into the male line, so that in the "human" model, the failure to separate becomes a failure to develop maturity. This is of course the point of work like that of Chodorow. It is not necessary to endorse a Freudian approach to personality or human development to accept the point of her remodeling. The unbalanced study of human nature in the past has given women very little reason to trust the resources of psychiatry and psychology; yet, ironically and also understandably, given the nature of the models used, it is women who use those resources in larger numbers than men, perceiving themselves to be incomplete and unbalanced by the models used in our society.[10]

Gilligan's article next addresses her own studies, challenging the received models of moral development. As she analyzes the studies in this area, there is, usually asserted as a standard in our society, a morality based upon individuation: competing rights, where individuals may do as they please, as long as they do not usurp other's rights. There is, also, a morality based upon attachments, where the model is one of weighing and living with conflicting responsibilities, not rights, and where the individuals are not isolated from each other, save when they challenge each other, but where individuals live always within a web of other selves so that <u>contextual</u>, not absolute, codes of judgment are both necessary and appropriate.[11] The two strategies for handling relationships are clearly not slight variations, but approaches to moral decisions that proceed from a different sense of self, a different way of experiencing the world, and different agendas for living. Gilligan's research has suggested that at least for a particular class of Western, educated people, these are gender-linked differences.

Chodorow's and Gilligan's concern to reexamine models, and the language and assumptions on which they are based, from the point of view of women, seems to me to raise large issues in several disciplines, not just in its

obvious connections with psychology, and I will return to this later. In particular, I wonder about the area of education itself. Is the learning model we use, as teachers in our classrooms, based upon unexamined assumptions about the developmental processes of our male and our female students? Do the university and college generally base their institutional structures (the 'isolated' individual in the lecture or discussion classroom), their assessment of achievement (competition to be "the best", grades, public questioning and debating), and their ideas of the value of education (detached, irresponsible, private, personal growth) upon a male model of individuation, separateness, and the competition of rights rather than the weighing of conflicting responsibilities? Even here, at the heart of our own value system as professionals in the classroom, might we not examine whether we have devalued or circumvented the norms of women's lives? In college, plagiarism is wrong: there are to be clear boundaries between one person's mind and another person's thoughts; in college, we are to learn to be independent and think for ourselves--dependency is immaturity and weakness; in college, the written tradition prevails with all of its assumptions about writing for a generalized audience from a detached specialized perspective. The female student who comes to college for her Mrs. degree is dismissed with tired comedy; yet her agenda is clearly the pursuit of affiliation. Is education, then, bound to, does it only work for, the isolated individual who does not seek affiliation first? Is the achievement of affiliative ties inimical to, beneath the notice of, to be isolated from what education is all about?

I certainly don't know the answers to the questions I'd like to raise by writing this. I don't even know the right questions yet, in many cases, and the ones I've just asked make me very uncomfortable. But one question has the ring of authenticity to me: what have we left out in our models? My own experience, and that of many other women and men, including those who contributed to the seminar's discussions which followed this talk, convinces me that our sins of omission are abundant and various in the area of gender, and that the sin of omission is not less costly than that of commission. Let me turn to specifics about what we can do, and are doing to re-evaluate the models we've inherited. Following the original version of this talk, three members of the faculty, Dr. Paul Laughlin, Dr. Mary Margaret Fonow, and Dr. John Coulter, spoke about their methods of addressing the absences and invisibilities of women in the curriculum. I'd like to summarize them here.

Paul Laughlin spoke about teaching I.S. 26, until recently titled "The Nature of Man in the Christian Tradition," and the various problems faced by a discipline which speaks of God the Father and the Brotherhood of Man. His approach begins with a lecture retitling the course and analyzing some of the linguistic and sociopolitical implications of the use of the male specific as the generic noun for human being. He draws attention in the content of the course to the elements of the Judaeo-Christian tradition which are male-specific (the Orthodox Jewish prayer, "Thank you, God, that I am not a woman") or show strong male point of view (St. Paul's comments on the marriage relationship) with particular concern to place such elements in their historical and cultural context as distinct from the time-transcending spiritual context of other elements of the tradition. In addition, the discipline of theology has historically been male-dominated through control of church hierarchies and of the educational systems of the past, and the course offers direct discussion of this phenomenon. A text has been chosen for the

course that is inclusive of women and their participation in the Christian tradition: Women, Men, and the Bible, by V.A. Mollinkott.

This example offers one model for incorporating into our existing classes a concern to recognize women's contributions and address the causes for their comparative absence in the disciplines we teach. Another approach is to consider the level of language itself. In her sociology classes Mary Margaret Fonow works with language as a socializing agent. Talking with students about the power of language to shape our perceptions and the specifically sexist quality of much of our public and private language is one way to focus on Oedipus' claim that when you say man, you include women. The class can tabulate the pronouns used for generic references in the textbooks and lectures in the course, and be given guidelines for how to use non-sexist language in their written work. (Dr. Spock now alternates male and female pronouns in his references to "the child," for example: this is one model students and instructors might use.) Must students be always male? Interestingly, when misbehaviour is described, the student is always male: an example of the way discrimination is not itself gender limited. Must professors, or researchers, or writers be always male? Do the pictures illustrating the course materials, or the concrete examples chosen to develop a concept or work out a scientific problem, show gender bias? Fonow's students, studying texts, have been able to demonstrate for themselves that in practice there is a gender specification to phrases using the word man. Illustrations for chapters called Social Man, Economic Man, Urban Man tended to exclude women; pictures chosen for chapters called Urban life, or Society, include both sexes.[12] Some discussion with students of the history of words in English may sensitize them to the gender assumptions we have held: master and lord have a completely different field of connotation than do mistress and lady. Women are defined by language usage in relationship to men, men defined by language usage in relationship to the world. Words referring to women historically develop into references to sexual behaviors: housewife has become hussy, for example. Women are often placed in categories with people defined by the society as not whole, not complete: children, prisoners, the mentally or physically impaired.[13] Students, made aware in a variety of classes that language is not a neutral or transparent medium, but a set of forms which categorizes and discriminates for us in ways we as individuals may not intend or choose, can then be freer to select alternative forms: human instead of man, he and she instead of he, woman instead of girl, etc. Fonow's example of signs of public bathroom doors in the Licking County Memorial Hospital,[14] which brought down the house at the seminar, should stand as the object lesson in what we want our students to reject in our language: the implication that female is negativity, a failure to be male, a place forbidden to men.

In the panel on 'What We're Doing Now,' Jack Coulter added one further example of an approach which can be taken in the curriculum to oppose an imbalance in materials taught. In the Fall of 1979 the English department formally adopted as the goal for its courses and readings the following: "Women writers and women's lives, considered together, will be given representation in English Department courses equal to that accorded male writers and male lives. Furthermore, all reasonable efforts will be made to choose texts and anthologies that offer the most even balance of male and female writers, given the restrictions of historical circumstances; the use of supplemental material (xeroxed handouts, reserve reading) is encouraged." The

department worked thus far on revising all of its Integrative Studies offerings to bring them in line with the goal. The objective in those courses has always been to select literature that represents the human experience; the assumption we could once make that human is identical with male no longer holds conviction. Coulter spoke both of the department's positive will to acknowledge this and make changes, and of the difficulties we face when dealing with literary history itself, difficulties arising when we construct courses for our majors. We resist, legitimately, turning art into propaganda for any sociopolitical stand, though perhaps it is harder to see the presence of propaganda (class values, for example) in literature we have gotten used to, and harder to see the art in literature whose point of view is new to us. In any case, such revisions and critical judgments are not easy to make: the past is "what has made everything possible"--shouldn't we make sure our students know it without modern frameworks imposed upon it? Clearly such a departmental goal as that adopted in the English Department does stir fundamental oppositions: so far that has been a productive argument.

Thus three colleagues have offered concrete approaches to the issue I am raising: how do we address male bias in the curriculum, whether it emerges within the Integrative Studies framework or in our own separate departmental offerings. Let me conclude by mentioning some of the specific questions and approaches Women's Studies has recently brought to the traditional curriculum. Since I keep using words like "traditional," history might be the best place to begin. History as a discipline must work with the traces of the past--thoughts, acts, events, changes whose existence has survived the moment of origination and left some "permanent" record. The access to history-making is--as historians have always in some fashion recognized--likely to be controlled and biased. Who keeps the records? Who is trained to write (in a literature society) or recite (in an oral society)? What are the standards for permanent recognition at that time and place? Who made the standards? For women in the Western European tradition, the distinction between public worlds (not female places) and private worlds (female places but not, by definition, places where history--public events--happens) has worked to exclude them from our textbooks. Lawrence Stone's fascinating history of the family in sixteenth and seventeenth century England is one of several recent historical enterprises that restore the private world to permanence and explores its patterns and significances; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's work on female friendships in nineteenth century America is another example of exemplary scholarship directed at the female worlds of the past; Elise Boulding's The Underside of History offers a thorough, well-documented survey of the history of women's lives and experiences for the intelligent layperson.[15] Elizabeth Janeway in The Powers of the Weak and Richard Sennett in Authority explore in theoretical terms the dynamics of the power/powerlessness relationship in our culture, an issue at the heart of women's experiences; both books I'd strongly recommend.[16] All kinds of people have not had public power as groups, whether class, race, or gender has kept them out, but their work from their subordinate status is the hinge on which the culture hangs. Sennett and Janeway restore this dynamic to our view and analyze its patterns and its costs.

Sometimes women have left traces in the past but we've not looked at them. In literary history, the work of Ellen Moers, Literary Women, and Elaine Showalter, A Literature of Their Own deciphers and defines a female

tradition created by a group who had, until the mid and late nineteenth century, little or no access to the classical, written, learned tradition men knew through their schooling and used as model, allusion, and substance in their own, male, literary tradition.[17] Jane Austen's famous disclaimer that she was "the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress" was given in response to an admirer of her work who wanted her to write a novel about a serious, admirable clergyman: "Such a man's conversation must at times be on subjects of science and philosophy, of which I know nothing; or at least be occasionally abundant in quotations and allusions which a woman who, like me, knows only her mother tongue, and has read very little in that, would be totally without the power of giving. A classical education, or at any rate a very extensive acquaintance with English literature, ancient and modern, appears to me quite indispensable for the person who would do any justice to your clergyman."[18] Her remarks are only one example from many where women writers speak of their consciousness of belonging to a separate tradition and world of experience.

In addition, the work of innovative historians like Natalie Zemon Davis, who writes about women in sixteenth and seventeenth century France, demonstrates that historians have assumed motivations for past female behavior, without seriously studying the historical circumstances of women's lives. Thus they misread the choices, for example, made by women when they confronted the new Protestant sects in the sixteenth century.[19] Furthermore the past may have been revised for public viewing before we rediscovered it. John Benton, writing on the famous letters of the medieval lovers, Abelard and Heloise, both confined to the celibate life after their love affair was forcibly halted by her family, argues that a prescriptive record of man and woman has been creased by the letters: those surviving show signs of forgery designed to rewrite the love affair and render Heloise's character and role more 'appropriately' feminine, by the standards of the period.[20]

While the periodization of the past has always sustained attack within the discipline, the questions raised by women's studies ask historians to consider whether the changes which mark the periods we now use affected males and females in the same way.[21] If we only considered changes of major importance to female lives, would the boundaries of our periods fall at the same points in time as they do now? Certainly for female lives, birth control devices are far more significant than conventional armaments, to take only one of the more obvious examples. Recent studies suggest that the Renaissance was not an advance for women's education and independence, though traditional histories stress the 'new learning' of the lay person as one of the period's major characteristics. Why is the history of women's suffrage a minor element in discussions of nineteenth and twentieth century Europe and America? Must it be assumed that Bismarck is more important than Elizabeth Cady Stanton?

In her essay "Feminist History in Perspective," Alice Rossi has raised questions about our approach to biography: is the focus on the individual life (or on large organized movements) a biased model?[22] What prevents us from approaching life histories as histories of marriages, or sibling sets, or networks of relationships, from developing biography that assumes the context and balances of a group of people are the reality of life, rather than one that assumes a single separate individual in contact with isolated

'influences' from other individuals? The separation of public life from private life may be a distortion of history and of biography for male as well as female. Have we the models both of history and biography that we do because those models match a male experience of independence, separation, and individuation, to use Chodorow's suggestions, rather than a female experience of context-dependence, relatedness, and intimacy?

Mathematics, and the sciences which speak that language most exclusively, offers another kind of academic issue. Colin Bull, Dean at Ohio State, has talked recently about the differences in the ACT scores of entering OSU freshmen, a population of over 41,000 students tested between Winter 1974 and Fall 1978. His analysis shows on the ACT scores in English for this population a unimodal distribution and no significant differences between males and females. The ACT scores in Math show a different distribution: "For the whole population there is a bi-modal distribution with distinct peaks at 26 and 16 (36 is the top score possible). For men and women, taken separately, we again have the bimodal distributions, with peaks near 26 and 16; with the male students, however, the upper peak is approximately twice the size of the lower, while for females the two peaks are about the same size." Bull goes on to suggest that for English, which is a required high school subject, we observe essentially similar scores for males and females (and one peak) while in math, not required of all students at the same levels and amounts that English is, a bimodal distribution reflects the different preparation levels of the students. And the difference between male and female ACT Math patterns raises the question whether "the poorer performance of the woman students in ACT Mathematics (is) also due to the effects of counseling?"[23] The mean high school class rank of entering women was 73.4 percentile; entering men, 65.4. Sheila Tobias' work on math anxiety points to a culturally stimulated high level of anxiety about mathematical work, particularly in women.[24] The evidence is strong enough to suggest that, at the least, female students avoiding math have been supported by their advisors if not stimulated to the avoidance pattern by those advisors. The academic setting needs to attack such gender biased patterns more effectively and appropriately on a daily basis than we have so far. Of course, both males and females are discriminated against by an academic environment that follows older cultural assumptions that males should choose scientific and practical majors, females the 'impractical' and refined arts. But perhaps we need as advisors to place more rigorous demands upon those who "aren't good" at math, and legitimize for them behavior that, in going against a culturally approved role, may help them fulfill their own potential. Tobias' work suggests that the problem of math anxiety is severe enough in students, particularly female students, to warrant an institutionally supported math clinic, staffed with individuals trained in confronting math anxiety and avoidance patterns.

My own discipline, literature, and the other arts are not without error or blemish from the point of view of feminist thought, of course. The arts generally survive from generation to generation because they are preserved: thus the biases, of class and gender, in those whose task it is to establish the canon are an appropriate subject for investigation. Access to the materials of creation--orchestras, marble, actors, education, or merely leisure and a pen, as in Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own--also varies in class and gender groupings. Certain arts seem more inimical to female

artists: the female playwright and conductor, for example, are less in evidence than the female poet and novelist. Is this, again, a result of the cultural division between public/male and private/female worlds? In literary criticism, much importance has been placed upon the complexity of the artist's language, the density of the verbal texture used. Women poets and fiction writers generally display this verbal density to a lesser degree than male poets and fiction writers. Does this make their rank inevitably lower? Or are there different and equally productive traditions of language use? In the praise of verbal density a product of the classically educated male models of the past or a non-sexist criterion for excellence? The arts, when they are seen as the product of the intense vision of the individual creator, may be offering a paradigm of action women feel uncomfortable with. Does the group enterprise, or the group involvement which produced the embroidery, china, and historical references of Judy Chicago's Dinner Party[25] represent a mode of creativity more characteristic of women but discriminated against by our individualistic view of art history? Many arts are group efforts--dance, theater, musical performances--as well as individual creations, and women as performers in these groups have shown themselves to be major artists. It may be that when we teach art and literature as the product of the isolated creative imagination we are stressing the side of art which threatens rather than strengthens the woman artist, and lacks full truth as a description of the creative process which is the result of a texture of experiences and persons (witness the medieval cathedrals) as well as the vision of one shaping will. High art, like high literature, often seems the art chosen by the wealthy, leisured class, not the art arising from the context of a wider cultural base.

What can women's studies productively say to the academy about issues of gender? Let me sum up with experience rather than bibliography. I ask my students from time to time to revision the world: all the world leaders, except two or three, are female; all the persons in the U.S. Senate, save one, are female; all state governors are female; all the Supreme Court justices are female, save one; seven-eighths of the representatives in the U.S. House are female; the President's Cabinet is female, as is the President; the President, Board of Trustees, and all but one of the Vice-Presidents of Otterbein College are female; all of the Nobel Prizes this year go to females. Would living in such a world alter your sense of yourself? Both males and females respond, without hesitating, yes. I am not by this exercise charging the culture with discrimination and malice toward women, only asking how the features of our world may affect us. The relationship between the culture and the person will differ significantly when the person is male and when the person is female.[26]

When asked what the human pattern was, we have in this culture been willing to say that it was male and white. To be male and white doesn't exclude a person from humanness; that isn't my agrument. But must we still in our transfer of the culture to each new group of persons in our courses convey only the white maleness of the culture? To acknowledge the bias of the past, seriously and with substance, is, I think, the very least degree of liberation we are obligated to offer to the future.

I am optimistic that we will see change. Students have begun to note,

on their own, for example, that women are present in Dante's Inferno only in the earliest circles of hell, and primarily in the circle of the lustful rather than the other areas of incontinence, let alone the lowest areas of violence and malice. Women show no signs of an inability to sin in daily life. Dante's segregation suggests that women didn't have access to the arenas for sinning--politics, commerce, warfare, education, the church hierarchy--from which he drew his material. Their presence in the circle of the lustful suggests more about Dante's encounters with women than it does about women's encounters with sin. Male bias, even when it apparently keeps women out of hell, is not what women want, to answer Freud's famous question. As Florence Howe's essay indicated,[27] the first goal for reformers of education for women was access to the male curriculum, a focus which remains important now primarily for the professional schools. Now the goal is revising the curriculum, through new perspectives on the old answers and assumptions, and through new knowledge and information about the invisible, silent reality of women's lives.

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FOOTNOTES

[1]Muriel Rukeyser, Breaking Open (N.Y.: Random House, 1973) p. 20.

[2]For the use of the generic man, the sexist complexities of pronoun use in English, and a specific, intelligible linguistic survey of the questions about sexist bias in language, see Mary Ritchie Key, Male/Female Language (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1975) esp. Ch. 8, "Subjects, Not Objects," and Ch. 9, "Speaking in Reference to Male and Female."

[3]Integrative Studies in the Nature of Man was changed, Winter 1981, to Integrative Studies in Human Nature, as a result of resolutions passed by the December Interterm Seminar.

[4]#1554, in The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (Boston & Toronto: Little, Brown & Co., 1955).

[5]Lionel Trilling, Prefaces to the Experiences of Literature (N.Y.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), pp. 266-67.

[6]Ibid.

[7]For other, less limiting discussions of Emily Dickinson, particularly of the relationship of feminine to masculine worlds, see, for example, Albert Gelpi, "Emily Dickinson and the Deerslayer: The Dilemma of the Woman Poet in America," in Shakespeare's Sisters, ed. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (Bloomington, Ind.: I.U. Press, 1979); or Cynthia Griffin Wolff's forthcoming biography of Dickinson: Pugilist and Poet: Emily Dickinson in Her Work, Oxford University Press.

After the seminar, I discovered corroboration of my view of Lionel Trilling's male-centered perspective: see Carolyn Heilbrun, who was one of his students and colleagues at Columbia, in Reinventing Womanhood (N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 1979), p. 125 ff., particularly p. 135: "One must also watch out for Trilling's 'we'. Women are not part of his 'we'."

[8]The male adoption of superiority may also be designed, that is, to combat what is perceived psychically or politically as a threat.

[9](Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1978). See also the valuable discussion of Chodorow's work, "On The Reproduction of Mothering: A Methodological Debate," J. Lorber, R. Laub Coser, A.S. Rossi, N. Chodorow, in SIGNS, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Spring 1981), pp. 482-514.

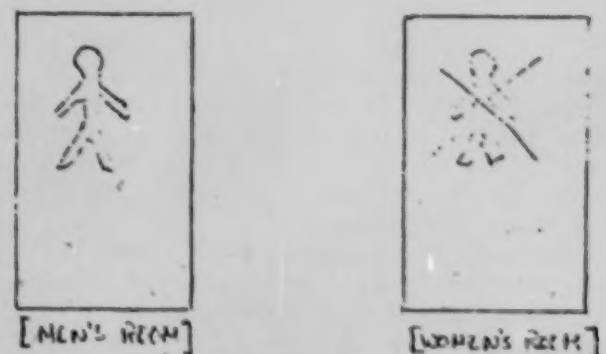
[10]See N. Weisstein, "Psychology Constructs the Female," in Woman in a Sexist Society (N.Y.: Basic Books, 1971); The Development of Sex Differences, ed. E.E. Maccoby (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1966); Judith M. Bardwick, Psychology of Women (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1971); Readings on the Psychology of Women, ed. J.M. Bardwick (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1972); Phyllis Chesler, Women and Madness (N.Y.: Avon, 1973); Dorothy Tenner, Review of Gender and Disordered Behavior: Sex Differences in Psychopathology, ed. E. Gomberg and V. Franks (N.Y.: Brunner/Mazel, Inc., 1979) in SIGNS Vol. 6, No. 1 (Autumn 1980), pp. 168-69.

[11]For a sociologist's description of a similar pattern, see Alice Rossi's use of Agency and Affiliation in "Life Span Theories and Women's Lives," SIGNS Vol. 6, No. 1 (Autumn 1980), pp. 4-32, pp. 8-9. An interesting analysis of Niebuhr and Tillich, Sex, Sin and Grace: Women's Experiences in the Theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, by Judith Plaskow (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979) suggests that definition of pride as the prime sin reflects a male perspective; self-abnegation may be the prime female sin (p. 2).

[12]A student recently (Fall 1980) wrote in an essay for one of my classes: "Now, during the present years of man's society, he occupies himself with business, finances, and other time consuming events." Generic man becomes gendered male very easily.

[13]Mary Ritchie Key, Male/Female Language, pp. 82-84. Nathan Pusey's "We shall be left with the blind, the lame, and the women," and Spiro Agnew's references to the difficulties of taming "oceans, fools, and women" are quotable, recent examples.

[14]The illustration:



Its source is: Joan Straumanis, Denison University, "Generic Man and Mortal Woman," Paper presented first at GLCA Women's Studies Conference, Nov. 11, 1978.

[15]Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800 (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1977). Carroll Smith Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in 19th Century America," SIGNS, Vol. 1, No. 1, (Autumn, 1975) pp. 1-30. Elise Boulding, The Underside of History: A View of Women Through Time (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1976).

[16]Elizabeth Janeway, The Powers of the Weak (N.Y.: Knopf, 1980). Richard Sennett, Authority (N.Y.: Random House, 1980).

[17]Ellen Moers, Literary Women (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976). Elaine Showalter, A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977).

[18]Jane Austen, Letter to J.S. Clarke, Dec. 11, 1815, in Jane Austen's Letters to Her Sister Cassandra and Others, ed. R.W. Chapman, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), Letter #120; also reprinted in Emma, A Norton Critical Edition, ed. Stephen M. Parrish (N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 1972), p. 361.

[19]Natalie Zemon Davis, Society and Culture in Early Modern France (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1975), pp. 66-68. See also E. William Monter, "Women in Calvinist Geneva (1550-1800)" SIGNS, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Winter 1980), pp. 189-209.

[20]John F. Benton, "Fraud, Fiction and Borrowing in the Correspondence of Abelard and Heloise," in Pierre Abelard - Pierre le Venerable, Colloques internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche scientifique, 546 (Paris, 1975), pp. 470-507.

[21]Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in Becoming Visible: Women in European History, ed. R. Bridenthal and C. Koonz (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), and in a previous version, "The Social Relations of the Sexes," SIGNS, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Summer 1976), pp. 806-23.

[22]Alice Rossi, "Feminist History in Perspective: Sociological Contributions to Biographic Analysis," in A Sampler of Women's Studies, ed. D.G. McGuigan (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan, 1973), pp. 95-108.

[23]Colin Bull, "Letter to the Editor," Sojourner, Vol. 6, No. 10 (June 1980), p. 8.

[24]See Sheila Tobias and Carol Weissbrod, "Anxiety and Mathematics: An Update," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Feb. 1980), pp. 63-70.

[25]Judy Chicago, The Dinner Party: A Symbol of Our Heritage (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979).

[26]This is an exercise we ought to do, of course, for black persons as well as female ones.

[27]Florence Howe, "Three Missions for Higher Education for Women: Vocation, Freedom, Knowledge," p. 292.

The Women's Movement and Women's Studies

by
Patricia Bayer Richard

The strands which were to form the contemporary feminist movement took shape in the middle 1960's and began a process of interweaving in the last years of that decade. Now, about fifteen years later, a network of feminist ideas, issues, organizations, services, and individuals spans the nation. This article sketches the origins and development of the feminist movement and its relationship with women's studies.

The Feminist Movement

Like any social movement, the feminist movement has attracted large numbers of individuals who share beliefs and goals and who seek fundamental change through collective action. Unlike some social movements, this movement promotes both inner, or individual, change (through consciousness-raising and resocialization) and outer, or societal change (through change in law and institutional structure) (see Richard, 1977). It does so through its indictment of sexism. Sexism refers to the sex role system based on prescriptions about "appropriate" behavior patterns and social roles defined solely on the basis of sex (Hole and Levine, 1971, 329), a system of social, political, and psychological pressures that tends to suppress a group (women) with certain biologically determined characteristics (Amundsen, 1977). By questioning the sex role system, feminists come to interpret many apparently non-political experiences and situations, such as language, work arrangements, job categories, marriage, as political, affecting the distribution of power. Similarly, the identification of sexism leads to a view that women constitute a political group or class (Hole and Levine, 1971; Amundsen, 1977; Cassell, 1977). In these ways, the use of sexism in feminist analysis specifies various targets for change.

Emergence

Why did a feminist movement emerge in the last third of this century? With the benefit of hindsight, some facilitating conditions can be outlined.

Among the conditions advancing the potential for a women's movement during the latter part of the twentieth century are a series of long-term and probably unintended changes in demographic and social trends. These trends include women's increased participation in the paid economy, smaller family size, and improved birth control techniques.

One of these trends, the increase in the number of women working for pay outside the home, constitutes one of the most dramatic changes in the American economy in the last quarter century. In January 1981, women comprised 43% of

all workers (Monthly Labor Review, March 1981, 85). Furthermore, the modal characteristics of working women have shifted: no longer is the young, unmarried woman the norm, women now head one in seven families; "dual-earner families" in which both wife and husband work are the majority of all wife-husband families; mothers with children under eighteen are more likely to work outside the home than not. And women, like men, work for the most part out of economic need (Hayghe, 1981; Blau, 1979).

Yet, women's increasing presence in the labor force has not enhanced their position in the work world relative to men nor has it changed fundamentally the division of labor in the home. A comparison of median wage or salary incomes of full-time, year-round women and men workers reveals not only that incomes of women are considerably less than men's, but also that the gap has not closed: in 1956, such women's median wage was 64% of men's; in 1981, it was 59% (National NOW Times, June 1981, 14). In addition, women still bear the brunt of domestic work (Hoffer, 1976).

More effective birth control and smaller families have altered the shape of women's lives. For example, these changes shorten that portion of a woman's life in which motherhood can be a primary activity and role, especially relative to the average lifespan. Fewer women of child-bearing age bore children in the 1970's; those who did gave birth to one or two children on the average rather than the two and three children norm of the 1960's (Waldman et al, 1979).

The presence of an ideology of reform, the general social climate and the state of protest movements in particular constitute other facilitating conditions. Deckard, for example, observes that three movements, workers', blacks', and women's, have often intertwined in U.S. history (1975, 248). In a sense, the civil rights movement, beginning in the 1950's, laid much of the philosophical groundwork for the women's movement, altering expectations and changing perceptions. It directed attention to the indignities and inequities suffered by some segments of American society. Further, the civil rights movement raised social and institutional explanations for racial inequalities, for example, socialization and institutional racism, which applied to sexual inequalities as well (Knowles and Prewitt, 1969; Carden, 1974, 152; Amundsen, 1977, 40-58). Besides the civil rights movement, the student protest and antiwar movements and New Left organizations supplied both impetus and recruits, especially to the women's liberation branch of the movement (Hole and Levine, 1971, 108-122; Carden, 1974, 59-63; Freeman, 1975, 56-62).

In addition to these sets of conditions based on observable phenomena, another kind of facilitating factor can be found within the literature on collective behavior and revolution. This literature posits a generalized concept of "strain" and a more specific notion of "relative deprivation" as preconditions for the emergence of collective action. Gurr defines the latter term, relative deprivation, as a perceived discrepancy between people's value expectations and their value capabilities (1970, 13). The idea of relative deprivation thus includes both subjective and objective components which bear on an individual's sense of a gap between what has been promised or implied by the society and what is given or can be attained. Some women, especially those well-educated and employed (Shaffer, 1973, 11; Carden, 1974, 153-55; Freeman, 1975, 17), those caught by some of the demographic shifts,

perceived such a gap.[1] This, too, facilitated the emergence of a social movement.

The combination of these factors, changed demographic trends and realities, a climate of protest and questioning, a sense of strain or relative deprivation on the part of at least some women, prepared the ground for the feminist movement.

Branches

The movement itself began as two distinct branches which developed concurrently but independently during the 1960's, recruiting from different groups of women. According to most analyses, the women's rights branch developed out of the publication of Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (1963) and the various state and federal commissions investigating women's status, beginning with President Kennedy's establishment of the President's Commission on the Status of Women in late 1961 (Hole and Levine, 1971, 17-107; Deckard, 1975, 325-332; Freeman, 1975, 51-56). These influences led to the formation of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966.

The second branch, women's liberation, took form contemporaneously with the women's rights branch. A number of accounts depict some of the crucial events (Freeman, 1975, 57-62; Carden, 1974, 59-63; Hole and Levine, 1971, 108-114; Evans, 1979). Briefly, women involved in civil rights groups, the New Left, peace groups, and student groups during the 1960's realized that they were being shunted into traditional and secondary roles. When such women attempted to bring this sexism to the attention of their liberal and radical male colleagues, they encountered disdain, ridicule, and dismissal. As a result, the women were further radicalized as to their own condition and began to form their own organizations in the late 1960's.

Development and Growth

At the initial stages of movement development, in the 1960's, the two branches were fairly distinct in terms of member characteristics, interaction between women in one branch with women in the other, interaction between groups of the two branches (Cassell, 1977, 102-104). Over time, these separations have been eroded, while cooperation, joint membership, and exchange have joined the branches together (Richard, 1977, 5-7; Cassell, 1977, 102). There remains, however, within the multi-group and decentralized structure of the movement as a whole, various strains in the movement.

As the movement matured, newer participants were added. Cassell characterized the process of expansion in the women's movement as follows:

> Like the ripples from a pebble tossed into water, feminism has expanded in widening ripples of change: personally, from feminist groups to women's lives; in organizations, from the utopian center to the reformist periphery; through social classes, from middle-to-lower and working-class groups; and geographically, from large urban centers to smaller cities and suburban communities (1977, 171-172).

Freeman says the movement increases by fission and enters new segments of the

population by the formation of new groups, rather than by more and different women joining established groups (1975, 150-151). Examples of this phenomenon are the creation of the National Black Feminist Organization in 1973 and the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) in 1974.

Through these processes, the women's movement's base has expanded into new elements of the population. While few feminist organizations are individually broadly based, in combination they produce a broadly based movement (Freeman, 1975, 151).

The number of movement participants is difficult to ascertain. The most easily documented memberships are those of the nationally organized groups, the largest of which is NOW. From its charter membership of 300 in 1966, NOW gained a membership of approximately 10,000 in its first four years (H e and Levine, 1971, 95), increasing to almost 55,000 over the next five years (Amundsen, 1977, 155), and reaching around 140,000 today (including a spurt of new members who joined in reaction to the anti-feminist actions and attitudes of such groups as the "Moral Majority" and of President Reagan and others elected in 1980). During this decade and a half, in addition, a multitude of grassroots, community-based organizations came into being. Cumulative membership of such local groups is impossible to estimate.

Specifically feminist organizations may be only the tip of the iceberg of movement supporters in any case. Carden, for example, claims that since the first women's rights and women's liberation groups were formed, new feminist ideas have been accepted by a great many people, albeit in relatively conservative form (1974, 163). Moreover, manifestations of the feminist movement include feminist publications, professional women's groups, women's centers, rape crisis and prevention centers, self-help health clinics, shelters for battered women and their children, the feminist credit movement, and the development of women's studies. It is to women's studies that we will now turn.

Women's Studies

Emergence

The conditions which facilitated the emergence of the feminist movement described above revealed fallacies in many commonplace assumptions about women's nature and women's role. Women's studies provided a forum for and interest in examining critically these assumptions, testing them against reality, and investigating their character.

The first women's studies courses were offered in 1969, just after the first organizations in both the women's liberation and women's rights branches of the movement came into being. Articles appearing in the early 1970's claimed feminism as the main impulse behind the dissatisfaction with universities' conventional wisdom about and treatment of women and the consequent commencement of women's studies courses (Trecker, 1971). The constitution for the National Women Studies Association (NWSA), drafted in 1977 at the organization's founding convention, makes this link explicit: its preamble states "Women's studies owes its existence to the movement for the liberation of women." Women's studies, then, derives from the questions raised by the

women's movement about the nature and position of women. It derives as well from the impact of the feminist movement on female academics. Acting on the movement dictum "the personal is political," female faculty began to attend to sexism in the university and in their disciplines. This had curricular and scholarly ramifications discussed below.

Growth

Women's studies growth has paralleled the growth of the feminist movement generally, beginning with a few courses at a handful of universities, then expanding across the country. In 1971, there were about 600 courses and 15 or 20 programs; in 1974, more than 2,000 courses and 80 to 100 programs; in 1977, about 275 programs; and in 1980, well over 300 (Women's Studies Newsletters, Winter 1974, Summer 1977, Winter 1980). Obviously the number of faculty involved increased dramatically as well: in 1974, 2,300 faculty taught women's studies courses, but by only 1976, the number surpassed 8,000 (Howe, 1977, 15). In addition, women's studies attained the trappings of an academic discipline or area during the 1970's. For example, by 1972, a women's studies newsletter had been initiated as had such research or literary journals as Women's Studies, Feminist Studies, and Aphra, with others joining later (e.g., Signs, Quest, Women and Politics). As mentioned above, a national organization was founded in 1977; the NWSA held its first national convention in 1979.

Development

Women's studies has developed with advances in the scope and depth of scholarship, the number of courses, and the establishment of programs. Elaine Reuben, the NWSA's national coordinator, defined women's studies as post-secondary programs whose curriculum develops from the new scholarship on women and/or that research and critical theory itself (1979). Women's studies has evolved in terms of both its creation and transmission of knowledge. Women's studies began with such purposes as raising consciousness about a male-centered curriculum (e.g., "Images of Women in Literature"), supplementing the curriculum (e.g., "The History of Women in the United States"), and establishing women as a legitimate topic for study and research (Howe, 1977, 15).

> Omitted from the curriculum, women could not know their history or understand with accuracy their present condition; admitted to the curriculum women could then share a history and ideology that would allow them to envisage and to move toward an equitable future. The presence of women in the curriculum would allow women to aspire and men to understand those aspirations (Howe, 1977, 16).

How serious and fundamental an undertaking women's studies might be was not understood immediately. Joan Roberts gives an illustration of this in a question posed to her by a Chancellor of University of Wisconsin, "How do you see women's studies--as errata?" (1976, 3). Indeed, Bari Watkins characterizes the first round of scholarship on women as compensatory, that is, adding women in. She notes, however, that attempts to apply existing theories often did not account for female belief or behavior, thus leading to reconstructive scholarship which

reconsiders disciplines' paradigms and thinking in them generally (1981, 12). Roberts also sees the study of women bringing intellectual confrontation in several disciplines, culminating in reconceptualization and, ultimately, in new explanatory systems (1976). To recast this as an example, the argument is that discovering the history of women means rediscovering history itself.

So, as the women's movement seeks broad scale changes in the society at large, women's studies seeks not only curricular additions, but also the transformation of disciplines, of the university, of knowledge. It aims to see the world anew by seeing it whole.

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On Being Called Girl

by
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I should like to begin my discussion of the word "girl" by recalling the march of the American Nazi Party through Skokie, Illinois, several years ago. It was, I recall, a painful but clear example of the sort of issue which the A.C.L.U. is called upon both to defend and explain. And it was, I recall, a painful and clear position which the A.C.L.U. took when it argued that the American Nazi Party had the right to meet in the public park in Skokie, to conduct what hateful rites and business it had to conduct and then march through town, banners waving, swastikas shrieking. The issue was simple--free speech and the first amendment. Painful because by their very presence, the Nazis opened up old wounds for many of the Jewish people who live in Skokie, some of them survivors of Nazi atrocities, literal ones, not figurative. The Nazis, I repeat, opened up these wounds and rubbed salt in them even though the salt was only figurative.

I should like also to begin my discussion of "girl" by recalling an incident over the word "mother". In a class on marriage and family counseling, I witnessed a role-playing episode in which a white student played the part of the son, and a woman black student the part of the mother. The family which they portrayed was white, middle class, and full of understated conflicts. In the middle of the session there was some apprehension that the role playing was not moving; it was heavy and slow. The student who played the part of mother stepped out of her role for a moment to argue briefly that the son was holding back too much.

Still in the spirit of play, the white student responded, "Well, mother, if only you would..."

He got no further. The angry black student jumped him. "Watch your tongue," she said. "Watch your language."

The teacher, in this instance, facilitator, attempted to pour oil on troubled water. (I guess it's time to warrant a reconsideration of this cliche, we have spilled so much oil...) The facilitator attempted to explain to Harriet, the black student, that Wayne had not meant anything figurative by the word "mother". He meant mother literally, denotatively. He had been playing the role of the son; therefore, he called Harriet "mother".

"If he's going to counsel," counseled Harriet, "he had better watch what he says."

Wayne was alternately red and white with rage, shame, and frustration. Finally, somebody explained "mother fucker" to him. His jaw fell open.

"That's not what I meant. I know what "mother fucker" means. That's not what I meant."

I love the word girl. But when I use it, and I always use it lovingly, I do, on occasion, get slapped down. I don't mind criticism as long as it is not minced with contempt or mixed with rage. So I have begun to listen to the word girl because this is what friends have been asking me to do.

"Come over here, girl."

"You don't talk that way to a white man, girl."

In the South, a black grandmother can still be called girl. Catch Ms. Lillian being addressed in this fashion, but you might hear a black woman of equal age and dignity, whose skin is not white, addressed in this way. And if the word is used much less today, the hurt, the indignity still remains among black women, for "girl" to them means less than a domestic, even less than a cat: "Give it to the cat." "Give it to the girl."

"Put that down, girl."

"Keep your hands off, girl."

A black teenager is examining a pair of gloves in a department store and trying them on. The sound of girl is not the sound of music. It is the sound of thief. Had a white "girl" been trying on the gloves, she might have been addressed "little girl" or "miss". More than that, she might have been free to examine the gloves without a reminder of her grandmother's former condition and servitude. Slaves and alley cats don't have names. So girl is offensive in both instances, brutal, even. But it demeans the speaker as well as the object of his scorn. And southern women, sensing how it demeans, use the word much less than men do, instinctively.

Are the girls playing bridge?

Are the girls powdering their noses?

Having one of their long luncheons?

Did the girls make the coffee this morning?

Give it to the girls to type.

I'll ask the girl to handle it.

Here girls are dim-wits; they will wreck that game of bridge, if you let them. Or else they are half-wits. Or, at best, they are Fridays to distinguished Robinson Crusoes. Always implied in the above is that girls are not capable of decision, management, or engineering. They're not capable of anything other than memory and routine. If the coffee machine breaks down, why, they'll yell for a man to fix it. Won't they? A man, not a boy. Myself, I shrug off this mild offense to girl and woman, for reasons I will explore in a moment, but suppose some rather distinguished and

accomplished ladies are being shown around the executive offices of the White House, and the ladies, it turns out, are themselves Supreme Court Justices or Senators.

"Would you girls like to see anything else?"

One begins to bristle at the word girl. It is not equal. It is not courteous. One begins to wish to assert.

"They are not girls; they are women, thank you."

There is in this last example not an attempt to be playful, but rather a hostility, masked, I think, as if to hide the real feeling which is, "You've come rather far in the world, but at some price. You're not really women; you're freaks, spinsters, queer."

To hear a distinguished woman called girl makes one reflect on the way girl attaches to geisha. Geisha by itself means a woman trained to be artful, an "arts-person." A geisha is trained in flower arranging, music making, conversation, which is largely the art of gossip. But she undergoes long training, and she indentures herself, or her parents do, so that she may acquire the fine arts of making men merry and relaxed. Why attach girl to geisha? Well, geishas do not sleep with their clients, nor do they marry, as long as they are geishas. When they do marry, they leave being geishas. Their unmarried state suggests girlhood. Calling a distinguished woman or a somewhat older woman a girl is often a reminder that her advanced age is not a sign that her spirit is young but that her body never quite made it, never made it to a man's bed, and if she is married, she's probably "queer" by disposition, So "girl" has all kinds of uncomfortable connotations in this instance. (But calling distinguished women, as in "what would you women like to see?" doesn't work either. It suggests a hen party. Ladies is perhaps neutral.)* Part of the offense, I think, occurs in "you" as subject of the sentence rather ladies or women. But girl won't work, no matter how you modify the word. Girl will not work no matter how playful or even neutral the tone. Girl is too full of sexual slurring.

And sexual slumming is just across the way. Consider "call girl" for a moment, as opposed to call woman. "For heaven's sake," I hear you cry..."Hold! Enough! If I call Dr. Ellen Merenbach a girl, it's not a sexual put-down at all. We are both physicians and elder statesmen, statespeople, oh, bull to that! When I say, referring to Dr. Ellen Merenbach, I'd like you to meet this charming girl, where is the slur? And what is all this talk of geishas? And if I refer to Dr. Merenbach as a pretty girl, am I asking for her ass? I put it to you..."

To which I can only reply: How does Dr. Merenbach introduce you to friends and colleagues.

Does she call you boy? Pretty boy?

"I'd love it if she did, especially if I were fifty."

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*Ladies, as in ladies and gentlemen.

"And if you were thirty?"

"Well, look, doesn't it depend largely on tone, madam? Tone and juncture? In dreams I hold your hand, ma-dam, ma-dam. See? You're an English teacher. I put it to you. Tone? Juncture? Inflection?"

Yes, I know that a "speech act" is not the word itself but its content, its juncture, its tone. But I know too that the word offends despite all these considerations. Too often it conceals condescension, hostility, smugness, and the sweeter the tone, the more acid the taste. Nor will the offense evaporate with the passage of E.R.A., for the word hurts and will go on hurting for a long time, even if I can, myself, present a lovely case for liking girl, and I can.

I love the word girl.

Because...

Long ago my mother assured me of immortality as long as I remained a girl. Only older people died. Yes, girls and boys could get run over by cars and trucks, and they might even drown if they went swimming after they ate a corned beef sandwich, but they didn't really have to die, whereas older people had to move over and make way for new boys and girls.

"And then we get old?"

"Who gets old?"

"We get old. The boys and girls."

"Not for a long time. You can be a girl for a long time."

"I won't grow up. I'll stay a girl forever."

"I won't hurry you," said my mother.

The word girl is tied to my not wanting to die. I am that little girl in the Hopkins poem who wept for "goldengrove unleaving." And I ran to my mother for comfort. And as my heart grew older, it came for some things colder, but for the word girl I reserve this special tenderness.

There is another reason I care deeply. The word girl suggests androgyny, as woman does not.

When I began to menstruate, my mother said, "See, you're no longer a girl. Now, you're a woman."

"But you promised," I said.

"What did I promise?"

"That I wouldn't."

"Wouldn't what?"

"Wouldn't have to grow up."

"Don't you want to be a woman?"

"And have babies and die?"

"Women don't die having babies."

"Well, they get closer to it."

"Come on," said my mother, "don't talk nonsense." And she slapped my face.

"Why did you do that?"

"To keep the blood in your cheeks."

And when I was madly, wildly in love, I was asexual, somewhere between eleven and thirteen. I skated around the park on roller skates that had no ball bearings, hoping I would run into my love. I bicycled around the block on flat tires - we were very poor - hoping to ride past my love, a sallow boy in knickerbockers. I walked into doors because he passed my way. After I began to menstruate, why love was a drag. My heart pounded, knees trembled, and who needed it? And a girl could get hurt because, on technicality, she was a woman. Women were forever being hurt and hanging around the telephone and growing long breasts or hiding pregnancies. A girl could always hide her bike around the block and punch her love in the nose, if he didn't show up or make her pregnant. A girl, too, was androgynous. She always went Dutch treat and ate from her boy friend's sandwich and said things like, "How can I become pregnant? How come you're not pregnant?"

My mother was a woman, also a lady and, once in a while, a girl. When she was a girl, she was my friend and jumped rope with me or bought me persimmons or got into the bath with me one day because it looked like fun. When she was a woman, she was full of advice and threats and warning and fears and "Don't" and "Musn't" and "Careful" and "Watch out". And when she was a lady, I didn't even recognize her.

I loved my girl-friends too, as I have never loved my woman-friends. We shared food, bed, homework, socks, secrets, sweaters. We giggled in class. I loved my boy friends too, but most of them were programmed at an early age not to play games with girls. They would not share with me, not food or snakes or marbles. All they wanted to do was hear me scream when I saw a mouse. Always they used the word girl as a slur.

"You can't do that; you're a girl."

And then, they would turn around and say, "Why don't you act like a girl?"

The man who later consented to be my husband took away the pain of the early "girls". He called me "girlele", a double diminutive, with none of the connotations of "baby".

The double diminutive "girlele" is tied to androgyny and immortality. Little, little girls don't have to die, and they share forever the cup cakes they bake with their friends. Men die. And men died too quickly in my household because they were programmed to die. They took out insurance policies to die. I have never envied men their having to become breadwinners and, what is more, successful breadwinners. And I have always felt acutely the injustice of a man being humiliated, losing his self respect, losing his manhood because he lost his job. I saw it happen to my father. I insist on E.R.A. because it is a rather solid way to put an end to that kind of death at an early age, for men. How about women? E.R.A. will make both the competition and the frustration between the sexes less fierce. And if many men do not see that E.R.A. is not usurpation but sharing, then I'm afraid they deserve their cardiovascular discomfort, not to mention their ulcers. I offer to share it all.

My father and other good men were too much in the "cauld blast". So I love the word girl. It was used with tenderness "chez moi", and synonymous with the Yiddish word "maidele," derived from German madchen, but you'd never catch "Maideles in Uniformen" as you would madchen. There was another word "moid". Moid also meant girl or young woman, but it connotated a creature rather coarse and insensitive. Too often it connotated even slut or slattern. But girl was always "light of limb" and full of hope even if she was a tiny kluts like me who could not really skip rope very well. "Girlele" is very like "maidele".

But you see I love girl for [illegible] sentimental reasons, fairly "icky" reasons and really no credit to me at all.

Courtesy is less than compassion, but it is supposed to have its roots in compassion. Courtesy dictates that I should listen to how I use the word girl much as the word brings back a time of trust and protection and hope, no matter the bullies who surrounded me. Girl never offended me, but "she" did.

"What does <u>she</u> want?"

"Give it to <u>her</u>."

The impersonal use of the personal pronoun often infurates me. Yes, I have heard insult and injury packed into Mrs. Lewis, as in, "Yes, I understand Mrs. Lewis desires me to be in class, even when both my legs are broken."

But replace Mrs. Lewis with "she". Pronouns should never take the place of nouns in polite conversation.

It is a moral position that I am taking, not a legal one. We all have the right to use an offensive word, if we choose, although I understand that a football player or a cricket player may have to warm the bench if he uses foul language at an umpire. There is, in short, no penalty for using the word

girl or mother or she or Jew. If a word demeans another human being, we can use it without penalty. If it opens up wounds, if it reminds other human beings of their former helplessness and their humiliation, we can even delight in bleeding others. We can even argue the market place of ideas and the First Amendment. What is legally permissible may be morally reprehensible, and we have to bear it in the public sector. This is freedom. The Jews in Skokie could have elected not to hear the Nazis. Nazies could have elected not to march through Skokie, but the principle of the law upholds freedom of assembly. The idea that sticks and stones may break bones and yelling fire in a crowded theater may break bones and yelling Jew and vermin in a public park may lead to sticks and stones and broken bones, notwithstanding, freedom of assembly must prevail. Bravo! I would not have it any other way. For the Nazis in spewing their filth may reveal what asses they are.

But in personal intercourse I can be more compassionate than the law and more careful not to make myself an ass.

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INVISIBLE WOMAN

by
Nancy McHugh

In 1981 women are invisible in the English standard and supplementary materials in the average high school. After fifteen years of concentrated effort by feminists and aware people at every level, things remain virtually the same as they were in the fifties and sixties. How can such a situation exist? Surely publishers have devised guidelines, upgraded materials, brought the good word? Yes, in many cases they have, although much of the published material still represents tokenism. Before examining the reasons for the current crisis and the possibilities for remediation, perhaps it would be wise to look at a bit of history and a rationalization that still prevails.

The reasons for "invisible woman" are probably many. Certainly one reason is a pernicious progression. Textbooks are revised and devised on the basis of what already exists. Most anthologizers keep a core of material that is both traditional and popular. Then they make "judicious" additions according to their own philosophy and bent. The shapers of such anthologies have been traditionally men. They have chosen materials from the vast body of work, (English, American, and world) written by men. The exclusion has been probably, as usual, largely subconscious and unintentional. It is no less a pernicious practice. The very repetitous patterning of the same authors has a subliminal effect upon all--teachers, educators, students, parents, publishers--it says that women somehow take a lesser place in literature both as authors and as characters. If literature reflects life and shapes it????

A second, seemingly rational, argument for the exclusion of woman by result rather than by design is the age-old one that since boys are more restless students and less avid readers than girls, it behooves the makers of curriculum to appeal to boys, and let the girls tag along as they may, and will. Hence a plethora of "man" stories about adventure and danger, many with the entire exclusion of women, some with the "traditional" casting of women in roles of "virgin" or vixen", mother or bitch. There may be other "valid" reasons for the original and continuing exclusion of women from the curriculum. The effects are the same: that women's thoughts, work, capabilities are lesser than men's; that women's roles in society are set (and so are men's); that people had better conform.

Presumable the above reasons still prevail. There seems to be no other way to explain the situation in my high school (and in several others with which I am well acquainted). What is the current situation in those schools? The current tenth grade anthology (1963 edition of Loban, Adventures in Appreciation) contains 82 authors; 9 are women; Millay and McGinley are the only poets who are women. Women are absent from or used in stereotyped roles in all or most of the short stories. The newer, Classic edition of the same title

(Perrine), 1973 has 72 authors, of which 5 are women. There are two short story writers, 2 poets. The subject treatment remains the same. The eleventh grade anthology for a required one-semester course in American Literature and Composition (1968, Adventures in American Literature) has 69 authors of which 8 are women. The stereotypes remain. The supplemental books are no better for redressing the wrongs. The tenth grade novels are The Yearlings (Rawlings), Tale of Two Cities, and Les Miserables. The introduction to the latter states: "In preparing this version...the editor has tried to make a book that would be interesting to American boys. All long descriptions have therefore been left out, and a good many narrative portions as well."

How can such a situation exist? Are there not updated materials? Are there not efforts to supplement? The updated materials are better: the newer anthologies, those with publishing dates of 1978-80 have more women and women with a wider range. But the numbers are still small, still a ratio of 5-1 even in the best of the new books. There have indeed been efforts, small and sporadic, to supplement. A very few high schools (last count 4 of 55) instituted courses in women's studies and purchased good supplementary materials. Here and there a few enlightened teachers tried to incorporate materials in their regular courses as well as elective courses. Unfortunately the crunch has come. Decreasing enrollments, proliferation of "remedial" courses, and especially budget cutbacks have forced teachers to rely on old materials. The electives are gone in many schools or maintained only in courses such as drama, journalism, and Shakespeare. There is no money to buy the new textbooks or replenish the paperbacks purchased in the early seventies. Increasingly teachers must rely on materials twenty years old. The back-to-basics movements and censorship have also played some part in the regressive curriculum and materials. In these times of increased class size, uncertain future, and low teacher morale, the likelihood of teachers reaching out to supplement the curriculum or even to fight for the principles involved is thin.

What then can be done? Should anything be done? What are the responsibilities of English educators? It seems to me urgent that all teachers keep the pressure on. Affirmative action in curriculum never really caught on. Now with diminishing resources and the constant social pressure of the "back to the fifties" exemplified by the President and many others, the dangers of losing what consciousness raising we had are great. Conscientious teachers need to be made aware continually of the devastating effect on both females and males of an unbalanced and limited curriculum. New teachers need to be made aware of both the dangers and the problems in redressing those wrongs that they will face as they come into teaching. They WILL find out-dated materials with even those in short supply. They will meet with apathy and resistance on the part of established faculty members who are "waiting out their time." In spite of paper shortages and copyright restrictions, teachers must find good materials to share with their students. They must learn to analyze established materials not only to see the problems but to devise coping strategies. Many times a "bad" example of sexism and stereotyping can be the basis for a lively class discussion and student research.

It has been said that, in times of economic restriction, liberal (and humane) programs and principles tend to disappear. The spectre hangs over us

daily in many areas of our lives. It is incumbent upon us as English educators who carry the power and the responsibility for the humanities and the teaching of values to see that teachers know how to apply them. This safeguard requires a number of actions that might serve as charges to the Conference on English Education:

1. Continue to provide courses at undergraduate and graduate level and in extension to focus on the need for a balanced curriculum, women's studies, the importance of non-sexist language. Advertise them!

2. Encourage community and adult education to promote such courses. (The community needs to be educated also).

3. Focus on such needs in articulation meetings with secondary and elementary schools (If your institution doesn't have such meetings, institute them!).

4. Assure that methods courses and other components of teacher preparation deal with these issues in more than superficial fashion. Help prospective teachers with philosophy, materials, and strategies; have them practice in pre-teaching and student teaching situations.

5. Keep the pressure on groups over which you may have influence: other educational organizations, community groups, administrators, training teachers, etc. For instance, someone should educate WASC and its regional equivalents for accreditation (they look for multi-cultural components; they should look for visible women as well).

6. Write about these issues; include them in your articles, bulletins, correspondence.

7. Continue to focus on these issues in conferences as you are doing now.

Teachers hold society in their hands. The quality of life is as much their responsibility as it is the concern of government. Awareness, affirmative action, balance--these are the responsibility of English education, too.

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WHINE, WOMEN, AND SONG

by
Gail Bossert Klink

America has always had its own rituals of courtship and marriage, just as it has had rituals for all aspects of its culture.

Because our land has fed us so well, and because we have never had to pay tribute to overlords, we had time on our hands. For over 300 years, we often filled that time with music.

If male-female relationships and music both were vital parts of our culture, it is not surprising that songs about that relationship should have dominated popular music from the time we flew the British flag until today. A musical trip from that colonial period until today will offer us many opportunities to see what our music has to say about us and how we've changed.

Our music was more often than not a lament, portraying women desperate to marry and men desperate to remain single -- or at least that's what they whined. This conflict of goals is perhaps the epitome of the irresistible force-immovable object myth and makes for a strange set of rules -- a strange "game" if you will.

> Many a tear has to fall,
> But it's all in the game.
> All in the wonderful game
> That we know as love.
>
> All in the Game, 1950's

From the earliest times, it was thought that the game had to be played because, where a man could perhaps survive without a woman, a woman could not survive without a man. Everyone knows that "a man without a woman is like a ship without a sail, a boat without a rudder, a kite without a tail, ... a raft upon the sand;" of course, the only thing worse in the universe is a woman without a man.

"The Old Maid's Song" tells the pitiable story of a woman who has not found a man -- and she isn't choosy.

> Come a landsman, a pinsman,
> A tinker or a tailor,
> A gentleman or a ploughboy
> A rogue or a sailor
>
> Don't let me die an old maid,
> But take me out of pity.
>
> Old Maid's Song, 1900's

We never fully understand why this woman is so anxious to marry. It certainly is not for financial security, as she will take a rich man or a poor man, so long as he is a live man. She obviously wants to get in the game.

In the beginning, women were, of course, men's ruination. If you've ever wondered why roses have thorns, look at "Barbara Allen," an exquisite folk ballad, more than three centuries old, which exists in innumerable versions. Originally from the British Isles, it was known all through Colonial America.

For love of hard-hearted Barbara Allen, Sweet William is dying. Summoned, she slowly goes to his death bed only to say, "Young man, I think you're dying." And then, in a too-late stroke of remorse she cries:

> O'n, father, father, dig my grave,
> Go dig it deep and narrow.
> Sweet William died for me today;
> I'll die for him tomorrow.

Nature then has the last damnation of this cruel woman.

> And from his heart grew a red, red rose
> And from her heart a briar.
>
> They grew and grew up the old church wall,
> 'Till they could grow no higher,
> Until they tied a true lover's knot,
> The red rose and the briar.
>
> Barbara Allen, 1600's

Some men avoid the problem or get out as fast as they can -- finding comfort in liquor. Having reached such a noble state, they, of course, attempt to make converts, as shows this 1700's song, "The Women All Tell Me." This noble ancestor of "The Little Brown Jug" must have been popular in Colonial America, as it appears in many song collections of the period, including the widely used Convivial Songster. First published in England, the words and music are anonymous, and no wonder! Besides declaring that unlike fine wine, women do not mellow with age, he credits them with causing murders, battles, and disease. If that isn't enough, they also get pregnant.

> She too might have poisen'd the joy of my life,
> With nurses and babies and squalling and strife;
> But my wine neither nurses nor babies can bring,
> And a big-bellied bottle's a mighty good thing.
>
> Then let my dear Chloe no longer complain;
> She's rid of her lover, and I of my pain:
> For in wine, mighty wine, many comforts I spy
> Should you doubt what I say, take a bumper and try!
>
> The Women All Tell Me, 1700's

One hundred years later, men are still bragging about their good judgement in dissolving relationships they can't control, and of course, singing about it, as in "Last Week I took a Wife." A favorite comedy song of the 1820's, it was featured in the "grand performance," The Forty Thieves.

The cobbler who sings this song has "vow'd to stick thro' life," but one week is actually the extent of his commitment. Then he must "take her down some pegs," and she, of course, runs away forever. The cobbler then sings, or is it whines...

> Then let her go, I've got my stall,
> Which may no robber rifle,
> 'Twould break my heart to lose my awl,
> To lose my wife's a trifle.
>
> Last Week I took a Wife, 1800's

The next to the last line suggests that Mr. Kelly, the author and composer, had read some Shakespeare.

By 1844, we have purchased, won, or stolen all the land between both oceans, and convinced England not to come back. Times are good. It is time for fun; it is time for love at first sight. One of the most enduring love-at-first-sight-songs, "Buffalo Gals," is first published in 1844 under the title "Lubby Fan," written by Cool White, one of the first blackface minstrels. It is extremely popular with minstrel troupes, and the title changes according to the locality where it is sung; "New York Gals," "Charleston Gals," "Lou'siana Gals;" finally, and permanently, "Buffalo Gals." In 1944, with some minor changes, it will reach the hit parade under the title "Dance with a Dolly."

The song is simple; while walking down the street, a man meets a woman, stops, talks, and then ...

> I asked her if she'd be my wife,
> Be my wife, be my wife,
> Then I'd be happy all my life,
> If she'd marry me.
>
> Buffalo Gals, 1844

By the time the Civil War has ended, some American women have seen too much, and the country is definitely going to the dogs. The ante-bellum, protected lady has become a fallen woman, and along the way she becomes a little smarter too, as "You Naughty, Naughty Men" shows us. This hit song of the epoch-making extravaganza The Black Crook, opens in 1866 at Niblo's Garden in New York, representing something new in an era which thrives on sentimentality and nostalgia; for the first time, a set of cleverly constructed lyric stanzas mounts an effective and witty attack on male hypocrisy.

> You may talk of love and sighing,
> Say for us you're nearly dying;
> All the while you know you're trying
> To deceive, you naughty men.

If a fortune we inherit,
You see in us every merit;
But too often, matrimony
Is a mere matter of money ...

And when married how you treat us,
And of each fond hope defeat us,
And there's some will even beat us
Oh! You naughty, naughty men.
You take us from our mothers,
From our sisters and our brothers,
When you get us, flirt with others
Oh! You cruel, wicked men.

The women here may be a little smarter, but not much. They still think a bad man is better than no man.

But with all your faults we clearly,
Love you wicked fellows dearly,
Yes we dote upon you dearly,
Oh! You naughty, naughty men;
We've no wish to distress you,
We would sooner far caress you,
And when kind, we'll say, oh, bless you,
Oh! You dear, delightful men.

You Naughty, Naughty Men, 1866

The novel and daring lines of "You Naughty, Naughty Men" point the way straight to Lorenz Hart and Cole Porter.

Not all songs of this period, however, are as enlightened. Men are still whining about their plight and attempting to show women for what they really are. "A little learning is a dang'rous thing." Could our innocent little lady have learned so few so-called masculine tricks about bargaining? That's what the perennial and timeless man-and-woman dialogue of this old, popular, and durable courting song, singing game seems to imply.

The gentleman offers, in exchange for the lady's hand, a paper of pins, a pink silk gown, a dress of green, a little lap dog, and the key of his heart. She refuses them all. When he offers the key of his chest, that she may have money at her request, she accepts. But after all, a man is not to be outwitted by a mere woman. He sees through her trickery, and realizes she doesn't want to marry him, and she only told him five times!

Ha! ha! ha! money is all,
Woman's love is none at all;
And I'll not marry, marry, marry,
And I'll not marry you.

Paper of Pins, c. 1800's

By the 1880's, we are singing about unfaithful men, believing they are normal. Note how long Clementine's lover mourned in this macabre story about

the miner's daughter who fell into the foaming brine, which for some strange reason has been a continual source of vocal merriment for 100 years.

> How I missed her! How I missed her
> How I missed my Clementine,
> But I kissed her little sister.
> I forgot my Clementine.
>
> Clementine, 1880's

Frankie, however, would not tolerate infidelity. Who doesn't know "Frankie and Johnny," termed the American gutter song classic by Carl Sandburg. While the theme, the jealous rage of a woman scorned, goes back to ancient balladry, this version, one of hundreds of variants (sometimes the unfortunate victim is named Albert) appears in the 1880's.

When Frankie finds out that Johnny went by with a girl named Nellie Bly, she gets Johnny's gun, shoots him because, as he confesses, "he was her man, but he done her wrong." While no one disputes her claim to having been wronged, Frankie, never-the-less, pays for this little outburst.

> The sheriff arrested poor Frankie,
> Took her to jail that same day,
> He locked her up in a dungen cell,
> And threw the key away.
> She shot her man, though he done her wrong.
>
> Frankie and Johnnie, 1880's

We are rapidly approaching the Gay Nineties, and thoughts are not too deep. Again, it is time for love at first sight, and "While Strolling Through the Park" appears. Introduced at Tony Pastor's vaudeville emporium in 1884, and popularized as a soft-shoe routine, the song is credited to Ed Hailey and dedicated to the songwriter Robert A. Keiser. Since no record exists of Ed Hailey, the general assumption is that Keiser, in fact, is the author.

Like "Buffalo Gals" 40 years earlier, a man and woman meet in the park and fall instantly in love.

In 1890 comes an invention that would revolutionize our social customs -- the bicycle -- especially the bicycle built for two. Notice that's two, not three. Her mother is left sitting on the porch where she had for years guarded her daughter's virtue when her beau came calling. We all have sung "Daisy Bell," better known as "Bicycle Built for Two." A careful look at the lyrics shows just who controls both the bicycle and the relationship. While he originally says, "We'll go 'tandem' as man and wife," which sounds like equality, and goes on the say, "I will stand by you in 'wheel' or war," which sounds like fidelity, he continues with, "You'll be the bell(e) which I'll ring, you know," which sounds like servility, and he finally says, "I will permit you to use the brake," which sounds as if Daisy Bell would have had more freedom back on the porch, mother and all.

Alas! Some women don't survive the Gay Nineties with their virtue intact. Some don't hold out; they are sold out! The heart-wrenching prototype of lachrymose balladry, "Bird in a Gilded Cage," is written in 1900 by Arthur J. Larub, words, and Harry Von Telzer, music. At Von Telzer's request, the song

is revised to read, "She married for wealth, not for love." After all, one can hardly cry for a woman who has lived in sin, at least not yet; it's only 1900.

It is interesting that the young woman admires her for the riches at her command. It is the young woman's beau, who cannot offer her the same, who points out how unhappy the poor bird is.

> She's only a bird in a gilded cage,
> A beautiful sight to see.
> You may think she's happy and free from care,
> She's not, though she seems to be.
> 'Tis sad when you think of her wasted life,
> For youth cannot mate with age.
> And her beauty was sold for an old man's gold,
> She's a bird in a gilded cage.
>
> A Bird in a Gilded Cage, 1900

Perhaps had the young man had gold to offer, he would have looked differently upon the fashion queen. Obviously, the old man did!

As we enter the 20th Century, we have not progressed very far from the theme of the "Old Maid's Song," that a bad man, any man, is better than no man, and so, Bill Bailey's lady love cries all over her laundry in this most durable and popular of all ragtime songs. Written in 1902 by Hughie Cannon, a Tin Pan Alley personality, the jaunty syncopated tune intrigues even George Bernard Shaw.

Even though the B&O brakeman "took and throwed her down" and doesn't support her, she wants him back, and makes an offer he can hardly refuse.

> I'll do the cooking, darling,
> I'll pay the rent.
> I know I've done you wrong.
>
> Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home, 1902

World War I is on, and men are dreaming of home and settling down. Written in 1917, in a period of stylistic transition, for an audience in sociological transition, "For Me and My Gal" successfully combines the joyous, relaxed, singalong quality of earlier songs with new accents of the coming jazz age. Nothing more than a description of a fairytale wedding that sends the couple off to live happily ever after, most people at least can sing the chorus by heart 64 years later.

The Jazz Age, the Roaring Twenties, is upon us, and we're getting bad again. He's back from the war and still looking to settle down, but she needs some convincing. She likes bathtub gin, and he's whining for "tea for two." Jazz, swing, mambo, rock -- as the popular idiom changes, so does "Tea for Two" from the 1924 show No, No, Nanette, again a success on Broadway nearly a half-century later. The song is perhaps best loved as an easy going "soft-shoe" beat with harmonizing on, "We will raise a family, a boy for you, a girl for me," a sexist remark in its own right. The entire song places the woman in a stereotypical role ...

Day will break and you'll awake
And start to bake a sugar cake
For me to take for all the boys to see ...
Tea for Two, 1924

By 1980, the Lone Eagle has gone up, and the stock market has come down. Let's get serious! Music becomes softer and more serious. And women once again seem to need to be protected. After all, they're just children. In the easy-flowing melody and charming words of Gershwin's "Embraceable You," written for the 1930 show, Girl Crazy, in which Ginger Rogers and Ethel Merman make their debuts, we find the male-female relationship reduced to an adult-child one, an often repeated theme.

Don't be a naughty baby,
Come to papa, come to papa do.
Embraceable You, 1930

To say World War II results in a lot of changes would be your basic understatement. Certainly not the most significant change, but one of most interest to us here, is what happens to women. He's liberating Mendinao; she's liberating herself. He flies to France; she makes the plane he flies in. And you can't make planes in a skirt. She puts on pants! Pants, the symbol of domestic authority, as in, "who wears the pants in this family?"

After four years, and dozens of you're-gone-but-I'll-be-true songs, the war ends. He comes home; she doesn't, or at least many don't. And guess what many of them are still wearing? These "Tom Boys" are a disgrace, and mothers everywhere remind their daughters of the words of the 1946 song, "The Girl That I Marry."

The girl that I marry will have to be
As soft and as sweet as a nursery.
The girl I call my own
Will wear satin and laces
And smell of cologne.
The Girl That I Marry, 1946

"The Girl That I Marry" is interesting as a classic example of the male-female roles degenerating into adult-child ones. There must be another reason. Only 46 years earlier, a man told us "youth cannot mate with age." In an effort to maintain superiority in a relationship, calling another by a subservient title is an old ploy. Some claim women are called girls in song and elsewhere because a mono-syllabic word fits more easily. Boy, of course, would also fit, but is rarely used even though it matches girl more logically. And if counting syllables really counted, one would only hear black, rather than nigger or the cumbersome colored person. Women are called girls at this time because men and women riding "tandem" through life comes much later. In 1946, men marry girls and women old enough to marry try to emulate a nursery.

The late 40's have to be the heyday of schmaltz. Once again, the long-suffering woman returns. Cole Porter [illegible]es The Taming of the Shrew into Kiss Me Kate and creates the standard "So in Love." Popularly, it is always sung by a woman who pleads:

So taunt me and hurt me,
Deceive me, desert me,
I'm yours 'til I die,
So in love, so in love,
So in love with you, my love,
Am I.

So in Love, 1948

A ray of hope! Are women fighting back? In 1900, Frankie Lane is still whining about a woman "who done him wrong," but, unable to believe a mortal woman can possibly hurt him, he ascribes to her supernatural powers.

If ever a devil was born
Without a pair of horns,
It was you,
Jezebel, it was you.

Jezebel, (recorded) 1950

Either the Korean War causes a shortage, or the Cold War creates a potential shortage, but once again women will take anything from a man so long as he doesn't leave her. In 1955, Billy Holiday revives an oldy but moldy "My Man."

He's not much for looks.
He's no hero out of books.
But I love him ...

He is untrue
He beats me too ...

But whatever my man is,
I'm his, forever more.

My Man, (recorded) 1955

And if he does leave, in 1958 he is welcomed back, even without an explanation.

Hush now, don't explain
You're my joy and pain.
Skip that lipstick
Don't explain.

Don't Explain, (recorded) 1958

Nothing like a little peace and prosperity to make things silly again. This song from The Sound of Music in 1959 actually makes sense to us, and we know it isn't his one year majority that makes him boss.

Totally unprepared are you to face a world of men.
Timid and shy and scared are you of things beyond your ken.
You need someone older and wiser.
Telling you what to do.
I am seventeen going on eighteen.
I'll take care of you.

Sixteen, Going on Seventeen, 1959

By the 1960's, we have progressed little. Women are still overgrown children who need to be protected. Actually, at this point, we're beginning to treat men as spoiled children who desperately need to feel big. Diana Ross explains it.

> I am woman; you are man.
> I am small so you can be taller than.
>
> I Am Woman, 1960

The year 1963 gives us the all time disgusting song. It insults both men and women. It tells women, particularly wives, that they must work constantly to keep their men from straying because men are immature and irresponsible and cannot possibly control themselves.

By the way, the husband is called <u>man</u> and the one called <u>little girl</u> is the wife -- lest you think this is a father-daughter song.

> Hey, little girl, comb your hair, fix your make-up.
> He soon will walk through the door.
> Don't think because there's a ring on your finger
> You needn't try anymore.
> For wives should always be lovers, too.
> Run to his arms the minute he comes home to you,
> I'm warning you.
>
> Day after day, there are girls at the office,
> And men will always be men.
> Don't send him off with your hair still in curlers.
> You may not see him again.
>
> Wives and Lovers, 1963

That same year, while men were still seeking virtue, a fast dying commodity, in their women, if they couldn't have it, they could pretend, so this old song was revived.

> How many arms have held you
> And hated to let you go?
> How many? How many? I wonder.
> But I really don't want to know.
>
> I Really Don't Want to Know, 1963

The year ends with the assassination of President Kennedy. With him dies Camelot, and we sink deeper and deeper into The War Nobody Wants. People begin to question old values and make changes, and the changes aren't all bad. Young people speak up; Blacks speak up; women speak up. And they all say the same thing. We are people; and if you won't listen to us as individuals, you'll have to listen to us as a group.

In 1971, Helen Reddy tells the story of the New Woman who wants equality, who wants to grow, and who, most of all, wants her brother to understand.

I am woman, hear me roar
In numbers too big to ignore.
And I know too much to go back to pretend
'Cause I've heard it all before
And I've been down there on the floor.
No one's ever gonna keep me down again.

Oh, yes, I am wise
But it's wisdom born of pain.
Yes, I've paid the price
But look how much I gained.
If I have to I can do anything.
I am strong, I am invincible, I am woman.

You can bend but never break me
'Cause it only serves to make me
More determined to achieve my final goal.
And I come back even stronger
Not a novice any longer,
'Cause you've deepened the conviction in my soul.

I am woman, watch me grow
See me standing toe to toe
As I spread my lovin' arms across the land.
But I'm still an embryo
With a long, long way to go
Until I make my brother understand.
Oh, woman! I am woman! I am woman!

I Am Woman, 1971

It becomes fashionable to make fun of old ideas. "Delta Dawn" pokes fun at our mothers and grandmothers who expected Knights in Shining Armor to carry them away.

She's forty-one and her papa still calls her baby.
All the folks 'round Brownsville think she's crazy.
She goes downtown with a suitcase in her hand.
Searching for a mysterious dark haired man.

Delta Dawn, what's that flower you've gone on?
Could it be a faded rose from days gone by?
And did I hear you say, he'd be meeting you here someday,
To take you to his mansion in the sky.

Delta Dawn, 1972

And some go nuts, embracing the <u>worst</u> qualities men thought they needed to have, and we get horrible songs such as "Roller Derby Queen."

At this time, the 1970's woman wants a relationship that is fair and honest and equal, or she wants out.

I guess it was yourself you were involved with
I would've sworn it was me
I might've found out sooner if you'd only
let me close enough to see.

That ain't no way to treat a lady.
No way to treat your baby,
Your woman, your friend
That ain't no way to treat a lady, no way
But maybe it's a way for us to end.

Ain't No Way to Treat a Lady, 1970's

But now we are in the 1980's, and young people are singing, not whining, about relationships that last -- relationships that grow when two people can grow as equals.

This song is from the last album made by the idol of America's youth, John Lennon.

Our Life together is so precious together
We have grown - we have grown
Although our love is still special
Let's take a chance and fly away somewhere alone

It's been too long since we took the time
No-one's to blame, I know time flies so quickly
But when I see you darling
It's like we both are falling in love again
It'll be just like starting over - starting over.

(Just Like) Starting Over, 1980

While a nostalgic voyage through musical history is fun, and while we enjoy laughing at our ancestors and ourselves, it is even more exciting to look ahead and realize that in spite of, or because of, our ability to roll with the tide, we're going to make it, and we're going to keep on singing. And most of all, we're going to keep on playing the game -- with greatly and continuously updated rules.

Granville, Ohio

THE NEW HONESTY IN FICTION BY WOMEN

by
Rebeccah Kinnamon Neff

Martha Quest, the heroine of Doris Lessing's five-novel series, Children of Violence (1952-69), finds it disturbing that "novelists have not caught up with life," especially in the depiction of women. As Chloe, in Faye Weldon's Female Friends (1974) says of herself and her friends:

> We have our arcane secrets, our superstitions, our beliefs, fact and fantasy mixed. Our sexual fears, both rational and irrational. Our own experiences which we share with each other. They are altogether different from what the novels and textbooks told us they would be.

Since a young woman tests her self-image and develops her identity in part by comparing herself to portrayals of women in the literature she reads, and since a young man's concept of the female is also influenced by what he reads, English teachers have a responsibility to introduce to students works that offer honest appraisals of womanhood. Women in modern novels and stories such as those discussed here confront their vulnerability and alienation, and above all, their desire for what Jean Baker Miller calls "authenticity"--being oneself (Toward a New Psychology of Women, 1976). It is not my intention to recommend the teaching of these particular works; other teachers should discover those that suit the interests, abilities and needs of their students.[1] Rather, I want to call attention to how women writers have addressed and are addressing the efforts of women to develop and assert strong, positive identities.

In the last half century the discrepancy between literature and woman's experience has been diminishing, at least in works by women, who have become increasingly outspoken about what it means to be female. Woman's writing is no longer circumventive and tentative in its acknowledgment of the female experience, but direct and honest. And if the images of woman in literature are still not free of self-denigration, as we would like them to be, this is because women are still in a stage of image exploration, trying to see themselves as they really are.

In a 1931 novel, Ambrose Holt and Family, American playwright and novelist Susan Glaspell tells the story of Harriette Holt, indulged daughter and wife. Her father accuses her of being "silly" and warns her that having ideas of her own "makes a great deal of trouble." Her husband thinks of her as a hostess, mother, lover, and beautiful woman and assures her that because she is all this she is "successful." But Harriette wants to be more than beautiful and dutiful. She especially objects to her nickname, "Blossom": "She was not a flower or a kitten or a doll; she was a woman who thought and felt. She had never succeeded in making anyone else know this; it must be her fault." She

is tired of being treated like a child and being expected to act like one, that is, to play the role of the dependent female:

> The trouble was, she looked like one. She did not look serious, or competent, she did not look as if she could step outside her own world. Lincoln thought she was as she looked. So did her father. Moreover, they wanted her to be that. As if it were a part in a play, and she well cast, and must stay in character. . . . It wasn't fair. Anyway, it was very tiresome.

Harriette is a victim of stereotyping; because she is beautiful and charming she is not expected to have a mind. No one except her mother-in-law, and later her father-in-law, respects her as a person. Only her in-laws can see beyond Harriette's doll-like appearance to the woman underneath.

Harriette Holt's progress from being just what the men in her life "thought she was" to asserting her real self is encouraged and aided by her maverick father-in-law, the Ambrose Holt of the title, who comes back to town conveniently just when Harriette needs him. She befriends him, secretly, because her family does not approve of Ambrose; even she accuses him of being irresponsible for having deserted his family. But he explains that he left because he could no longer keep up the pose he had assumed and yet could not be himself. "Few of us have the courage to let people know what we really are," he tells Harriette. Ambrose becomes his daughter-in-law's alter ego, on whom she projects her discontent, her restlessness and her desire for a freer, less constraining life.

When Harriette finally confronts her husband and tells him about her secret meetings with his father, he is furious and accuses her of being "stupid, meddling, conceited, and mindless." In her new-found courage she replies, "I'll tell you one thing. . . I always had more mind that you'd let me have. I was never the fool you tried to make me!" Stunned by his wife's assertiveness, Lincoln leaves her for one of his periodic visits to New York. In the interval before he returns, Harriette goes through a phase of self-recrimination common among women in real life and in fiction. However, she is befriended by one of Lincoln's associates, who gives her a copy of Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own, a gift which underscores a very important motif in the novel, one which is perhaps the most frequent image in fiction by women--a separate place, a private space in which the inner, essential self can be expressed.[2] Glaspell's novel ends with the death of the child Blossom and the birth of the woman Harriette, symbolically imaged through the death of Ambrose. Although it is not clear just how Harriette will go about making a life of her own, she is at least starting out on a journey, "a pretty good journey," thinking to herself that while "It would slip back and often seem a good deal as it had before," at least she is not the same: "One took what was there, and went ahead."

Glaspell's novel illustrates a persistent theme in fiction by women: the need for a strong, individual identity derived from activity apart from and perhaps in addition to the traditional "womanly" roles. The lack of an independent life leads some women to resent the demands and pressures of restrictive role-playing within marriage, and many see it as a form of bondage.

These same women may interpret their need to love and be loved as a weakness in their natures that makes them vulnerable to enslavement. "I threw up fortifications," says Marie Rogers, the first-person narrator of Agnes Smedley's Daughter of Earth (1943), "to protect myself from the love and tenderness that menace the freedom of women. . . ." "Could there really be love free from danger and subjection for a woman?" she asks herself. At nineteen she was "ashamed of the desire for love, tenderness and companionship that existed beneath my rough and defiant manner." Her defiance is directed against marriage in particular, for "When one loves, one can easily be enslaved. Freedom is higher than love. At least today. Perhaps one day the two will be one." Yet twenty-five years later Jane Grey in Margaret Drabble's The Waterfall (1969) laments the condition she calls "Sexual Bondage," and to Iris Murdoch's Harriet Gavender (The Sacred and Profane Love Machine, 1974) there is something "terrifying" about love being "woman's whole existence."

Contemporary writers are suggesting that woman's life need not be confined to loving and being loved. Books like Marge Piercy's Small Changes (1972) reiterate that marriage can become a prison for a woman if it deprives her of the opportunity for expressing herself as an independent personality.[3] Beth runs away from her short-lived marriage because she finds it delimiting and degrading. To her friend Miriam she explains, "I'm trying to make a center in my life that isn't a man. . . . I'm trying to make a center in my own self. . . . So much of it is undoing things. Finding that I'm not what people told me I was." Similarly, Smedley's Marie Rogers confesses, "In pain and tears I have had to unlearn all that my mother beat into my unformed mind." She finds herself hating herself for being born a woman.

A woman's self-hatred derives largely from degrading images of womanhood. For example, according to the conventional double standard governing sexual mores, woman is "regarded as a physical being who 'became ruined' by sex experience, whereas man became men by the same experience" (Daughter of Earth). As a deterrent to illicit sexual activity--as a means of keeping them "pure" --women have been taught to fear sex. Even today some women still associate sex with shame and violence. The novels and stories of the seventies provide another view. In Small Changes, for instance, Miriam finds her sexual initiation quite different from what she had been led to expect:

> She had read a great many stories about women losing their virginities, and she had expected to be somewhat frightened. There seemed always an element of brutality, being torn, thrust open, rent apart. But it became clear to her that her defloration would not be even slightly scary.

Instead, the experience is one of play and fun, and afterwards she feels that "she was born to herself. She had become beautiful and a woman and the Queen of Sheba and Merciful Mary and Holy Aphrodite." While there is always the danger of over-romanticizing the pleasures of sex, that woman's sexual initiation can be pleasurable and satisfying, that it can be thought of in sacramental terms, is a welcome element in recent fiction by women.

In spite of their achievement of sexual fulfillment, female characters like their real life counterparts continue to associate love and marriage with exploitation and pain.[4] Some try to make themselves invulnerable by adopting

a life style outside marriage. Some, like Beth in Small Changes, take refuge in love for other women; others opt for strictly sexual relationships that make no emotional demands; still others, seeking to avoid being betrayed by love assume "masculine" roles and adopt "masculine" traits. Greater economic independence and sexual freedom allow these options, but they may be ways of only masking the real problem. As psychologist Clara Thompson points out in her book, On Women (1971) "nominal freedom of behavior does not necessarily indicate inner freedom from conflict." "Moreover," she continues:

> sexual freedom can be an excellent instrument for the expression of neurotic drives arising outside the sexual sphere, especially drives expressive of hostility to men, or the desire to be a man. Thus promiscuity may mean the collecting of scalps with the hope of hurting men, frustrating them, or taking away their importance or in another case it may mean to the woman that she is herself a man.

Thompson describes a young woman, who competing in a once male-dominated business, real estate sales, took pride in acting "like a man" in her sex life; that is, she insisted on no emotional involvement, no commitment. In short, she was refusing to act "like a woman" because that would negate her feeling of self and would be a "denial of the chance to be an independent person."

This description fits almost exactly the narrator and central character of Katherine Harding's "Success is not a Destination but the Road to it." In this story a complete reversal of stereotypes is presented in the persons of the tough, unemotional business woman who sells real estate in Palm Beach and likes fast cars and the frail young Englishman with whom she becomes friends and whom she teaches to drive. Jane picks up men for one-night stands; she does not want to commit herself to anything permanent because she wants to avoid getting "dumped" by a man as her mother was by her father. "I never take a man home," she says; and she always insists on separate motel beds. Her relationship with Ian, however, causes her to consider her defensive behavior. She wonders whether in rejecting his affection she has left him "vulnerable"; and in a fit of remorse she sends him gifts and waits for news of him at the hospital where he is undergoing a heart operation. Later when he leaves for New York, she contemplates how her driving habits reflect her attitude toward herself and toward life: "Usually I assume cars, people, will get out of my way, and I just step on it." She remembers her father advising, as he taught her to drive, "Look at where you want to go, not at what you want to avoid." But her mother set a poor example. Her overconcern with avoiding obstacles made her an insecure, frightened driver who easily lost control of the car. Consequently, she was always running into things; that is how she died.

By rejecting her mother's driving habits as a model, Jane, in effect, has sought to avoid the kind of behavior she associates with femaleness. Instead, she has assumed a "masculine" identity. The episode with Ian shows her that she has not succeeded, however, in making herself totally invulnerable. Pondering what she has become, she sees herself as an "asymmetrical" woman ineffectually wavering between passivity and aggression: "My feelings change between letting go the wheel and moving along slowly, not very fast,

having things come to me as they may, or driving fast, hard, running things down: people, animals, woods, tearing things up until I can't anymore." Driving hard and fast allows Jane to compensate for the powerlessness of being female. "To assume a masculine personality," writes Thompson, "looks like progress and gives the woman the illusion of going in the direction of the freedom of her time." In rebellion against a derogatory self-image passed on by her mother a young woman may, like Jane, identify with males at the expense of her femaleness. Yet the assumed image may not rest any more comfortably in her female psyche than the one she has rejected, and she may experience self-alienation. As Jane considers her reflection in the rearview mirror of her car, she thinks, "Who is she? I'll pretend I don't know her, I'll try to dredge up thoughts about what this woman is like." Dissociation and self-hatred are her greatest deterrents to achieving a positive and healthy identity.

Another story in the same vein is Anna Kavan's "World of Heroes," also a first-person narrative by a woman who has chosen a traditionally male vocation in order to compensate for the limitations of being female. She becomes a race car driver because the track allows risks in "high-powered" cars which she believes make her "invulnerable." She enjoys the adventure, danger and comaraderie until a crash leaves her scarred and she is rejected by her former racing buddies. She is no longer "one of the boys." Both of these stories suggest that woman's need for independence, for adventure, for achievement and recognition can not effectively be met merely by substituting "masculine" images for "feminine" ones. The solution lies in developing both sides of the personality, the assertive and adventurous qualities as well as the gentle and nurturing faculties that are present in each person, male and female.

Without overtly adopting a "masculine" personality, a woman may play down her femaleness and even suppress her "feminine" impulses, as a protection against becoming emotionally dependent on another person. Consider Judith of Lessing's "Our Friend Judith." Because she fears becoming "submerged" in another person, Judith, author of "cool and intellectual" poems, has rejected the roles of wife and mother for the noncommital role of mistress to older married male writers and intellectuals. Believing that singlehood is the only way to insure that she will remain "her own person," she has created for herself an image of a dowdy intellectual who prefers the British Museum Reading Room to parties. Yet at times Judith's "mask slips," as the narrator puts it, and her true womanliness reveals itself. On these occasions, as when she tries on a friend's discarded but still good Dior dress that brings out her natural beauty and transforms her into "A rather intellectual wood nymph," she feels ill-at-ease and quickly retreats into her customary protective clothing and manner. "One surely ought to stay in character," she asserts, as she d[illegible] her "old cord skirt and woollen blouse."

Two other incidents, both involving cats, reveal Judith's concern for preserving her independence and her identity. The second episode, set in Italy, where Judith goes on a research assignment, dramatically illustrates her personal anxieties and defenses. A very young pregnant cat that becomes dependent on her is alone and frightened as its kittens begin to be born. Suffering in pain and terror, the cat turns on its kittens and even kills one of them. Since Judith has left the cat to go swimming with her Italian suitor, though she knew the cat's labor was imminent, she blames herself for its suffering and behavior.

In the village square the cat, having taken refuge under a lorry, is surrounded by other curious felines. This scene is particularly significant, for Judith herself has become an object of curiosity to her friends. The experience with the cat breaks down her defenses, and in retreat from the warm spontaneity of Italy, Judith scurries back to cold, intellectual England, to safety.

The somewhat self-conscious and apologetic woman writer in Alice Munro's "The Office" also faces the problem of how to deal with society's distrust of the woman who needs a life of her own and a place of her own in which to get in touch with her own creativity, a place outside the conventional "feminine" space and away from the appurtenances of femininity that sometimes stifle a woman's intellectual and imaginative powers. Renting a room in which to work, she tries to remove herself from the very distractions which the new landlord imposes on her--things that in his opinion make the place more suitable for a lady, more cosy and homelike. From the beginning this woman has to fight the notion that wanting a place of her own in which to work is self-indulgent and improper. Then she has to suffer the indignity of being spied on, having her femaleness exploited, and finally being accused of abnormal behavior. In defeat and rage she packs up her typewriter, her table and her instant coffee and leaves her "office." What was to have been her own space has been violated by a distrusting male.

The questions raised in these stories and the situations from which they arise mirror the concerns of contemporary women who are still struggling with the pressures, demands and expectations--overt or implied--that make them feel guilty and apologetic for desiring inviolable time and space in which to stretch their minds, extend their skills, and engage in a larger sphere of activity. The mother of the central character in Munro's Lives of Girls and Women (1971) sums up a recurrent theme in recent fiction by women:

> "There is a change coming I think in the lives of girls and women. Yes. But it is up to us to make it come. All women have had to now has been their connection with men. All we have had. No more lives of our own, really, than domestic animals. . . . But I hope you will--use your brains. Use your brains. Don't be distracted. Once you make that mistake, of being--distracted, over a man, you will never be your own. You will get the burden, a woman always does."

Not fully understanding the point of her mother's advice, the young woman thinks:

> Her concern about my life, which I needed and took for granted, I could not bear to have expressed. Also I felt that it was not different from all the other advice handed out to women, to girls, advice that assumed being female made you damageable, that a certain amount of carelessness and solemn fuss and self-protection were called for, whereas men were supposed to be able to go out and take on all kinds of experience and come back proud. Without even thinking about it I had decided to do the same.

This affirmation of self comes from a woman with the confidence to take on the world without a cloak of protection and the courage to experience the same pride of humanity as a man. Contemporary fiction records the changes in the lives of women and the effects of these changes on individual women and men. It is hoped that as women discover they need not sacrifice their womanhood in the struggle for personhood, their writing will offer strong new images of human dignity by which young readers (as well as older ones) can test their self-perceptions and their perceptions of others.

NOTES

[1]Recommended sources for this discovery: Women and Fiction, ed. Susan Cahill (New American Library, 1975); Women and Fiction, 2, ed. Susan Cahill (NAL, 1978); Solo: Women on Women Alone, eds. Linda Hamalian and Leo Hamalian (Dell, 1977); Fragment of a Lost Diary and Other Stories, eds. Naomi Katz and Nancy Milton (Pantheon Books, 1973).

[2]In this case, Lincoln Holt, a poet as well as a business man, has a room to himself where he writes; no one else is allowed to enter it. Harriette has to learn that instead of yearning for admittance into her husband's private space, she must find her own. On the subject of the man's "forbidden chamber" as it appears in fairy tales, see Madonna Kolbenschlag, Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye (Doubleday, 1979), p. 162.

[3]Kolbenschlag finds a similar theme in Hemingway's fiction. She argues that their fear of loss of freedom, of being trapped in a marriage, makes Hemingway's male protagonists evade emotional committments. Ibid., pp. 141-142.

[4]Cf. the point of view of Hugo in Drabble's latest novel, The Middle Ground (1980): "Love, they say, redeems, but it is love itself that exposes us."

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CREATING WOMEN'S MYTH:
EMILY DICKINSON'S LEGACY TO SUSAN GLASPELL

by
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Alison's House by Susan Glaspell is a popular play among amateur theaters and is generally recognized as one of the highlights of American theater in the 1930's. Through it, Susan Glaspell personalized and translated the Emily Dickinson myth using it to portray her faith in human creativity. Regardless of the fact that Glaspell was not given permission to use Dickinson's name or poetry in Alison's House, she must have felt very strongly that Dickinson belonged to the world for she insisted on writing the play, and it is one of her best. In 1931, it won her the Pulitzer Prize in drama.

According to one of Glaspell's critics, Arthur Waterman, Genevieve Taggard's The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson inspired her to write Alison's House.[1] While Taggard's biography concluded that Dickinson was in love with Gerald H. Gould, a young minister who Taggard claims Dickinson finally rejected because she could not leave her father,[2] Glaspell preferred to center her play on an earlier theory about the cause of Dickinson's seclusion, a theory that Taggard cited and rejected in her biography. Glaspell has Alison Stanhope, her Emily Dickinson figure, seclude herself because she loved a married man and would neither pursue the relationship nor renounce her feelings for him. In her own life, Susan Glaspell had also fallen in love with a married man, George Cram Cook, and like another character in the play, Elsa Stanhope, the niece of Alison, she chose to consummate her love and risk ostracization from her society. Glaspell also brought Emily Dickinson's life a little closer to her own by placing the play in Iowa, her home state.

Thus, by writing a play about Dickinson's life, Glaspell was able to explore many of her own questions. She examined her own sense of morality, loyalty, human loneliness, and human potential, and ended her play by having Alison Stanhope, though dead for eighteen years, bequeath to her isolated niece, Elsa, her unpublished love poetry. The play is about how one generation can nurture another. Glaspell, by moving from Taggard's vision of Dickinson to her own, was able to nurture herself. In creating Alison Stanhope, she created the spiritual mother she needed; in creating Elsa Stanhope and having her family reconcile themselves to her decision, Glaspell could more easily accept her own earlier decision to pursue a relationship with George Cram Cook.

When Susan Glaspell wrote Alison's House, she was fifty-four, had lived in Chicago where she attended the University of Chicago, was one of the founders of Provincetown Players, and had written many novels, stories, essays, and plays. A searcher and idealist, Glaspell was painfully aware that every solution has its cost. One drama critic, Ludwig Lewisohn, saw her as "the Puritan struggling toward freedom, towards (sic) unaccustomed expression."[3]

If Lewisohn was correct, and behind Glaspell's strength and rebellion hovered the fear and self-conscious torment of the Puritan, it is understandable why Emily Dickinson should attract her: Dickinson was also an artist, and a woman who felt the pain of isolation. She was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, and was two generations older than Susan Glaspell; she was born one generation before the Seneca Fall Declaration was adopted at a meeting organized to consider the social, civil, and religious conditions of women, and one generation before the Married Woman's Property Act was passed in New York, allowing women to keep their property even if they married. Emily Dickinson never became involved in the political aspect of the woman's movement, but her life portrays much rebellion: she never joined the church, never married, attended Mount Holyoke College for one year, and wrote poetry that was stylistically innovative and emotionally honest.[4] In writing Alison's House, Glaspell was naturally reaching back in history toward Emily Dickinson in hope that she might be able to create the female support she, and other women trying to fulfill their own destiny, needed.

The process of mythmaking is an old one. Raphael Patai, in Myth and Modern Man states that in early societies emotional truths were given as much importance as objective truths, and the legacy of myth was as highly valued as that of more physical tools:

> Myth had been a very important part of the body of knowledge that each individual had to acquire in order to be equipped for the battle for survival. In every human group, myth was no less carefully preserved and transmitted from generation to generation than such concrete details of practical knowledge as how to make an axe or use a bow.[5]

The myth that Susan Glaspell needed, the myth of one woman bequeathing her wisdom and acceptance on another generation, did not exist, so she created it. Some critics, like Mark Van Doren, failed to see the necessity of such mythmaking and found Alison's House an insult to Dickinson. In his review of the play he reveals his outrage:

> Miss Glaspell has written before, and written better, about the influence of a dead woman upon her family and friends. It is an interesting theme, if a somewhat artificial one, and much might be done with it. But very little has been done in the present instance, and the little that has been done is offensively false...Emily Dickinson has suffered many indignities from her biographers, but none so heavy-handed as this. The falseness of the play consists in its saying so simply that a great poet...is personal in this fashion.[6]

Van Doren thought Glaspell's willingness to change the biographical information in order to create through Emily Dickinson a mythical figure of wisdom and nurturance was a sign of bad taste. It is possible to view Glaspell's gesture in quite the opposite way; by personalizing Dickinson, Glaspell is paying her the highest compliment one individual can give another: she is viewing Dickinson's life as an energizing and ordering force to help herself and other individuals find the strength to act and choose as they will, and as they must, according to their own personality and their own vision.

Glaspell had no qualms about changing the facts of Dickinson's life. She clearly understood that what she wanted to write was a play about Dickinson that would give her emotional grounding and a nurturing heritage of female vitality. She needed her own tribal gods, gods that she saw the men around her were more readily able to find. George Cram Cook, for instance, had so long a genealogy that he could "make some of his ancestral lines run back farther than his paper would reach." He could even afford to be ironic about his heritage:

> "George Hubbard, of Middletown, Connecticut, here appears as having the 512 part of my heredity in that generation, three hundred years ago...Watch the precision with which I can express the relation between me and the famous burgeois philosopher Benjamin Franklin. He was my father's mother's mothers's father's father's father's father's father's sons's son. I run up the family tree two generations higher than necessary in order to land on Benjamin from above...Christopher Rowe's father could pick up a whisky barrel and drink from the bung-hole. What Herculean thirst! Is it any wonder I drink?"[7]

Claspell wanted what Cook had inherited. She clearly portrayed this longing in The Road to the Temple, her biography of George Cram Cook, the founder of the Provincetown theater, her lover, artistic collaborator, husband, and friend. The biography was written after Cook's death and reveals the respect and admiration she felt for him as well as her longing for a nurturing heritage such as the one he had. She believed that Cook's diverse heritage helped him find his own balance:

> Jig's (George Cram Cook's) family did well by him, not only in going to the top of the wave, but in not staying there... When you see grandfather, father and son you see human society, with personal quality, luck and changing conditions making destiny. It is like a relief map; a concentration and acceleration, there to give you such understanding as drama can give...George Cram Cook grew up in a town that had a Cook Memorial Library, the Cook Home, and a Cook Memorial Church. I am constrained to say again--there having been no Glaspell Home for the Friendless--these things are relevant.[8]

In Alison's House, published three years after The Road to the Temple, Glaspell created the drama of a heritage she needed. In The Road to the Temple, she was already looking for this heritage. She had looked for it through female as well as male figures. When she wrote about George Cram Cook's mother, Ellen Katherine Cook, Glaspell revealed her need for a strong female model who could create regardless of unfortunate circumstances. Ellen Katherine Cook became, in Glaspell's depiction of her, a spirit undaunted by circumstances. Left motherless at four, Ellen Cook found the strength to carve out a place for herself where she could remain true to her own individuality and her own rhythms:

> She was very small, quick movements like a bird's, a clipping way of speaking (sic). She was ill-nourished by the life of

> that place in those days; one feels that a richer personality would have resulted from richer-soil--a little too much energy burned up in just keeping alive....She would go alone and think, which was thought queer. She was capable of impersonal delights: some one on the other side of the world would score a point against complacency, and she would gloat as over a bright saying of one of her own children...Words come when I think of her: Brave (sic); thin; pure; inviolate; brittle; timid; thwarted; unconquered...She had a certain hard insistance on individuality...Of all these people behind Jig, she was the significant pioneer, for she broke a trail of self out of the life around her.[9]

In her isolated strength, non-judgemental nature, and ability to feel impersonal delight, Ellen Cook seems like a prototype of Alison Stanhope. Both carved a "trail of self' out of the life around them, giving Glaspell hope that she could continue to do the same.

Alison's House is filled with characters searching for themselves and serving as models for one another. Alison Stanhope is the major mythic figure, the major bearer of light: even though she has been dead for eighteen years, her spirit echoes through the play, healing those characters who will allow her spirit to enter them. One of the characters, Richard Knowles, a young poet and reporter from the Chicago Record Herald, who has come down to the house to do a story, verbalizes what many of the other characters in the play feel about Alison: "'She isn't dead. Anything about her is alive.'"[10] The entire play takes place on December 31, 1899, and the turning of the century, complicated by the fact that the house is being broken up and sold to a man who plans to modernize it and then convert it to a summer resort, is on the mind of nearly all the characters. Eben, a nephew of Alison, is afraid that Alison's essence will be lost with the change. He tells his father, Edward Stanhope, his younger brother, Ted, and his unphilosophical wife, Louise, of his fears:

> "It was all so darn real today, coming down here for the last time, and the century going--her century. When I got the first glimpse of the place through the trees I had the feeling of the whole century being piled on top of her, that she couldn't get out from under." (p. 39)

And there are characters who do not want Alison to be saved for the next century. Agatha Stanhope, Alison's sister, feels compelled to burn the unpublished poetry her sister left her, poems that reveal her love for a married man. Since the Stanhope family is selling Alison's house and she will be moving in with her brother, she feels that she can no longer postpone destroying the manuscripts. She prepares to burn the poetry but is psychologically unable to carry through with her plans. Because she cannot force herself to directly destroy the poems, she decides to burn down the entire house, but the fire is discovered by other members of the family and is put out before it can do much damage.

Agatha is still convinced that the family is obligated to keep Alison from the world, but she dies before she can successfully act on her conviction.

After her death, her niece, Elsa, her nephews, Eben and Ted, and her brother's secretary, Ann, fight to bring the unpublished poems into the next century, intact. They attempt to convince Agatha's and Alison's brother, Edward Stanhope, that Alison would have wanted the poems to be saved and that he has no right to keep her from the world. Generation battles generation for the legacy of Alison Stanhope.

Alison is saved by more than effective argumentation; she is saved because she has been vital and has passed this on in the form of gifts and art. In the play, she serves as the personification of wisdom without judgement. Eben, her nephew, recalls the presents she gave him: an apple, pebbles from the river, little cakes she'd bake, and delightful poems. When he and his sister Elsa would run off the river she'd promise secrecy: "Alison won't tell," "Alison knows," and when he was sad, he could interrupt her work and receive comfort rather than reprimands:

> "I am crying. She makes a funny little face. She says--Tell Alison. I tell her Jimmy Miles has knocked over my mud house. She says--You can build a fort, and put him in it. She tells me the story of the bumble bee that got drunk on larkspur and set out to see how drunk you could get in heaven." (pp. 124-5)

When Alison is alone again, she places the image of the bee into her poem; the poem becomes its heaven, just as Alison's kindness becomes a heaven for her nephew. Elsa also has her memories of Alison's wisdom and generosity, and therefore helps save her for the world. She, too, as a young child, went to Alison's room for solace; Alison would comfort her by saying "Whatever is wrong, Alison will make it right" (p. 113). Once she remembers running to Alison's room, interrupting her writing, and crying because Aunt Agatha would not give her a cookie; she had just pulled the cat's tail:

> "She tells me Aunt Agatha can't help being like that, and that the cat would agree with her. And she says--what if I had pulled the tail off, and we laugh; and she writes me a little poem about a cookie that had no tail. She gives me candy, and stands at the door so Aunt Agatha can't get in, but God, she says, could come down the chimney." (p. 123)

Not only family members recall her gifts: Richard Knowles, the Chicago reporter, also views Alison as a bearer of light. When he first read her poems she helped him open up to his own perceptions. He "saw the lake--because she had seen the river" (p. 6). Alison is present whenever people are trying to love, trying to create, trying to be alive. She never judges, but rather supports anyone who is attempting to form either artifact or spirit; she does not prevent change, nor does she try to foster it; she simply, in her mythic wisdom, accepts that nothing is permanent and nothing is absolute.

Alison is also saved because there are potential bearers of light who are capable of using her wisdom to foster their own. They learn from her and then give what they can. Elsa Stanhope is such a character; so is Richard Knowles. Their actions may not parallel Alison's, but their spirits do.

Elsa is a more developed character than Richard, and as a woman is more directly connected to Alison: she, being a woman, can more easily serve as a guide to other women. Ann, her father's young secretary, confesses to Elsa that she and her friends have idealized Elsa for years, and that Elsa played for them a similar role to the ones Alison played for Ted and Elsa:

> "I always wanted to talk to you. I always had--sounds foolish--a sort of case on you. All the younger girls did. Elsa Stanhope--they'd say, as if you were what they wanted to be. . . . It seemed you had everything. Beautiful--a Stanhope--so nice to everyone, yet always holding yourself a little apart. We used to think of you as a princess." (p. 118)

Elsa writes no poetry, but she has beauty, spirit, her own form of integrity, and she gives what she has. With Ann's help, it is she who convinces her father that the poetry should be saved for the world, that Alison would have wanted it that way. Stanhope agrees to let his sister be: "She loved to make her little gifts. If she can make one more, from her century to yours, then she isn't gone. Anything else is--too lonely" (p. 54). Stanhope argues that it isn't what Ann or Elsa said that persuaded him that the poetry should be saved, but that it was Alison herself who convinced him that the gift must be made. In the play, he momentarily becomes the bearer of light as he passes the poems to Elsa and says, "For Elsa--From Alison." Father and daughter reunite; the distant bells ring in the century.

In creating Alison's House, Glaspell was not only creating a myth that she could use, but was also creating a gift of hope for the world, and especially a gift of hope for women. As Ann says to Stanhope, Elsa should have the poems because Elsa is a woman and Alison said it for women, not so that they would make her choices, but so that they might find the strength to make their own. In writing her play, Glaspell not only created the spiritual mother she needed, but herself became a spiritual mother. Glaspell, like her characters Alison Stanhope, Elsa Stanhope, and Richard Knowles, needed to receive light but she also needed to give it. It is a human need. In The Road to the Temple Glaspell mentions that it was a strong force in George Cram Cook's life. She quotes one of his poems in which he verbalizes this need to his daughter: "'I have been the light-bringer/ To those around me/ Because light is born in me/ And is there as a gift to be given,/ And I have not given it to you,/ And my life seems to me wasted/ Because I have not./ Having been/ So much myself/ I would like to be also/ A link--a moment of transition/ Between our powerful past/ And you....'"[11] Cook, having been himself, wanted to serve as a link for his daughter; Alison Stanhope, because she had been herself, could serve as a link between herself and her isolated niece, between herself and Glaspell, between herself and anyone who would listen. Glaspell also wanted to serve as a link between herself and other searchers. By writing a play about a woman who could bring light, she created a new woman's myth, and she transofmed herself into a bearer of light.

Notes

[1]Arthur E. Waterman, Susan Glaspell (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1966), p. 86.

[2]Genevieve Taggard, The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930), p. 121.

[3]Ludwig Lewisohn, Expression In America (New York: Harpers, 1932), p. 394.

[4]Paul Ferlazzo, Emily Dickinson (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1976), pp. 13-41.

[5]Ralph Patai, Myth and Modern Man (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 10.

[6]Mark Van Doren, "Drama--The Pulitzer Prize Plays" Nation CXXXII (May, 1931), p. 591.

[7]Susan Glaspell, The Road to the Temple (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1927), pp. 6-7.

[8]Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[9]Ibid., pp. 17-18.

[10]Susan Glaspell, Alison's House: A Play in Three Acts (New York: Samuel French, 1930), p. 5. All subsequent references to this edition are internally noted within the text of this essay.

[11]Susan Glaspell, The Road to the Temple, p. 377.

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A Second-Hand Lonely:
Gender Traps in Toni Morrison's Sula

by
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Chronicling the fortunes of two Black girls in a small Ohio town from 1919 to 1965, Toni Morrison's novel Sula demonstrates the classic dilemmas involved with growing to maturity. This theme, though evident in her short first novel, The Bluest Eye, and her later, more complex narratives, Song of Solomon and Tar Baby, is given its clearest and simplest dramatization in Sula. The device of paralleling and contrasting two characters' interwoven stories of growing into adulthood is, of course, far older than its use here, for instance in the work of Mark Twain or Charles Dickens. Curiously enough, such fictions have infrequently developed the growth of female characters into adult women. When females are depicted as the protagonists, then interesting changes usually take place in the nature of such a growth narrative.

The basic reason for this alteration in form grows quite naturally from literature's role as a reflector of society. If women are defined as essentially passive, nusturing, and male directed, then they are by definition largely denied the wider arena of social action--work, leadership and challenge are given specialized and restricted meanings for this female protagonist. Similarly the personal female role and the social or gender role she plays must be shown as somehow being brought into balance if the female protagonist is to thrive. In its most frequent plot incarnations, the female protagonist is shown being given a choice, of men, tasks, or "lifestyles" and is, consequently, rewarded or punished in direct proportion to her acquiesence to society's messages about the appropriate choices a "nice" girl ought to make. In fact, it's difficult for most authors to develop female characterizations that incorporate assertive and nontraditional traits while, at the same time, not showing society condemning that female for her nontraditional female role behavior.

Toni Morrison in this sense has an advantage when she writes about a small, rural Black Ohio community because white society's male and female roles are clearly inappropriate for the different realities life presents to impoverished Blacks. Sula, for instance, presents a society where the dominant figures are actually matriarchs, like Helene Wright and Eva Peace. The men have been emasculated by white patriarchal society, whether from wars, like Shadrack and Plum, or from the temptations of socially endorsed solipsism, as are Boy Boy, Jude, and Ajax. In this Black world which is so characterized by the physical enervation and absense of responsible males, the reader might expect the overt celebration of women's strength, but the novel illustrates how social myths are ever more forceful than observed reality.

For example, Helene Wright wants a chauvenistic male railroad ticket taker to approve of her; Eva Peace so badly wants her son Plum to be a man

that his failure leads her to choose to kill him, instead. Thus the idealization of patriarchal values is clearly dominant in the society of the Bottom, and marriage is the highest aspiration of a girl like Nel Wright. Devotion to gladly nurturing others becomes her chief preoccupation in life. In light of this disjunction of physical reality on the one hand, and social myth on the other, the reader may ask what a character can do who sees the predicament and senses that happiness cannot be found by dutiful conformity to an inadequate social ideal called "womanhood".

This was the challenge faced by Sula Peace. Her name is the title of Toni Morrison's novel, and she is surely the dominating character. Strong, unconventional, asocial, Sula demonstrates some of the possibilities for a female child's growth into maturity as an independent adult. However, she also clearly illustrates the gigantic cost of abjuring the social role of womanliness. Because of her independence, she leaves Medallion, returns to live alone, experiences casual sex, receives castigation and dies. Her paired character and friend, Nel Wright, is, perhaps, more appropriately called the protagonist of the novel because she experiences a major change at the novel's conclusion. Her epiphany, anagnorisis and peripeteia are a precise consequence of her contrast to Sula and delayed recognition of its meaning. Whereas Sula is independent, Nel is conforming, male directed, selfless, nurturing: the socially perfect mother, wife and woman. Neither character is to end up "happily ever after" in the novel.

A closer examination of the text's implied meanings shows that they are often revealed through depiction of the ways that human beings deal with and learn from their experiences. The workings of the mind are documented, especially memory. In plotting techniques, the novel presents an event and omits all explanations or analysis; it may suggest value by showing what a character learns from an experience, but more often that knowledge is badly skewed. For instance, war damages men in the novel and is never understood. And one misunderstanding can lead to gross error, as in Eva Peace's decision to kill her son, which in turn leads to her daughter's "suicide" in flames.

The reader in this case is shown Eva's delayed understanding that taking a life is not justified, when she admits that her daughter's death was sent by God as a "judgment against her" (67). Another important illustration of this delayed learning from experience through the belated exercise of memory is found in the inadvertent death of Chicken Little, which eventually bonds the "killers," Sula and Nel, in secret grief for many years. In each of these episodes the novel demonstrates a pattern: an experience is lived, gives emotional reactions, is misunderstood, but eventually is given clarity through the exercise of memory and finally emerges with a clarifying sense of self-perception and understanding.

Of all the characters in the novel, Sula and her friend Nel appear to be the persons with the best chance of learning from experience. Both girls are introduced as damaged by their parents. Nel's mother has driven "her daughter's imagination underground" (16). Sula is injured by overhearing her mother announce, "I love Sula, I just don't like her" (48). Turning to each other's friendship for relief, the girls are drawn together by "loneliness so profound it intoxicated them" (44). Twelve years of age, they found "each other to

grow on." Joined in mutual admiration "they could afford to abandon the ways of other people and concentrate on their own perceptions of things."

Soon enough, though, the girls are separated by one's romantic attachment to an attractive male. Nel observes Jude Green's need to find someone "industrious and loyal to shore him up" (69) and accepts marriage as an institution where "the two of them together would make one Jude." The author makes it clear that this romantic attachment "to Jude's shame and anger selected her away from Sula." A decade later Sula returns to Medallion and resumes her friendship with Nel, who again enjoys being helped to "see old things with new eyes." But shortly this happy bonding is broken by Sula's thoughtless flirtation with Jude, which creates a separation and rift that continues, beyond Sula's death three years later, for another 28 years.

Nel does not clearly understand the double liability of being Black and female. As Morrison points out about girls, being neither white nor male "all freedom and triumph was forbidden to them, they had to set about creating something else to be" (44). Left without Jude to serve or Sula to interact with, Nel is truly alone and desperate.

Sula herself is described as a most curious person. She has had several unusual experiences which were themselves painful and isolating. Two events are described by Morrison as keystone experiences: the first, the discovery that her mother Hannah did not like her, and the second, the unintentional killing of Chicken Little. The novelist says, "the first experience taught her there was no other that you could count on; and the second, that there was no self to count on either" (102). Additionally, she was wounded by an experience she shared with Nel which led to a vital misunderstanding. This had led her to make an unusual decision for a 12 year-old girl. In this episode the two schoolgirls are harassed by Irish ruffians; Sula slices her finger to show the boys how tough she is and to protect herself and Nel. However, the praise she expects from Nel for behaving so rationally turns to ashes in her mouth when her girlfriend shows only disgust for Sula's violent action and the blood. Years later Sula remembers this experience as one that helped to convince her that rationality itself is an inadequate guide for life. Instead she decides to "let her emotions dictate her behavior" (121). Here again, memory is shown to itself be inadequate. When events are not fully communicated, misunderstandings can create powerful consequences.

In the second half of the novel, the narrator describes Sula's complex personality at greater length. Given the advantage of knowledge that Nel does not have, then, the reader can perceive many reasons for Sula's behavior. It is true that she gives arrogance and self-indulgence "full reign," experiments, trusts only her own emotions and experiences, and takes nothing on faith. Too late, for example, she learns about the sweet attraction of conjugal bliss when Ajax leaves her. Belatedly she can comprehend something of what Nel must have felt when Jude left and then her consequent anger toward the "temptress" Sula. Morrison makes it quite clear that Sula, the Black woman who has gone into the white man's world, will not be accepted for herself--outside of racial or gender roles--in either location. As a consequence, all she can do is proudly assert her own separate identity. Thus it is easy for her to dismiss Nel's accusation that she has offended the propriety of being a "good black woman" and insist in most unwomanly fashion, "I got my mind. . . I got me" (121).

Nonetheless, Morrison's delayed expository background on this character serves the purpose of suggesting to the reader that there are deeper motivations than Sula's proud statements to her accusing grandmother and best friend would reveal on the surface. The reader learns, for example, that Sula's decade of traveling in the white, patriarchal world has shown her no man who could share with her "the slant of life that made it possible to stretch it to its limits" (104). Learning the limits of lovers, Sula finally learns that she is looking "all along for a friend. . . that version of self which she sought to reach out and touch with an ungloved hand."

The isolation that her actions have brought on her leaves Sula "craving for the other half of her equation," and Morrison goes on to add that it made her "dangerous" (105). The physical ailment that destroys her is a convenient catalyst for the novel's plot. A social pariah who is hated by the ignorant Black community, she physically pays the price for her independent and anti-social, even masculine, behavior. At the final deathbed scene, no reconciliation of old friends is to take place. Each woman is separated from the other by bad memories, misunderstandings, guilt and remorse. Neither is capable of complete candor or even complete self-knowledge which could be shared at this time. Sula's "idle imagination" leads her to brag that she is "going down like one of those redwoods," a strange metaphor in this context, and a good reflection of the woman's boastful separation from other peoples' reality. But much of what the dying woman says is an attempt at useful honesty; she warns Nel that the man she is grieving for, Jude, is not worth it, that Nel's pain is a "secondhand lonely" (124). She also asks why Nel couldn't forgive her and how she can be so sure "who was good." The author adds that Nel's "true motives for her charity" (120) in making the visit are hidden from her at this time. Sula's own dedication to the loving friendship is given concrete depiction in the narrative when the moment of death arrives and is painless; Sula's last thought is, "Wait'll I tell Nel" (128).

The next scene brings about the crisis and epiphany of the novel. It takes place 25 years later in 1965, but emotionally and intellectually time has stood still for Nel Wright Greene. The catalyst is the senile Eva Peace who nudges the memory and imagination lying dormant in Nel. The old woman asks her another question, "You, Sula, What's the difference" (145). Morrison explains, Nel has a "bright space opened in her head and memory seeped into it." Whereas before in grief Nel had wished that Sula was there to "make it all right" (93) with explanations, now Nel has to use her own stimulated imagination to be adult and make it all right for herself. Being reminded of her complicity in the secret of Chicken Little's death, the 55 year-old Nel experiences a flashing reassessment of her life. She is overcome by circles of sorrow, generated by the ultimate revelation that one may often learn long after events have transpired and grow only when forced by these reassessments and reevaluations. Thus the anagnoresis and peripeteia show Nel discovering that her identity has been tested in the crucible of friendship, not in the unsatisfactory roles of daughter, wife, and mother; she sees at last, "all that time I thought I was missing Jude" (149).

From her manipulations of the delayed insights of her characters, Morrison appears to show that neither extreme dedication to conformity or to independence

will solve life's problems. Neither denial of traditional female roles or acceptance of them will guarantee any likelihood of achieving happiness. The most complex possibility presented in Sula does not, however, deny humans the possibility of achieving self-actualization. Through its presentation of the dynamics of male and female roles in Black America, the novel thus depicts ways through which human beings may experiment with gender roles, rise above their limitations, and move toward the more difficult cultivation of humanness. In practice this novel demonstrates the liabilities of extreme rejection or submersion in sexual-social gender roles and suggests that self-awareness, social-awareness and the optical aids given by honest communication may be the only keys we can find in the endless search for new ways to live in America today.

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EMPTY BENCHES: GWENDOLEN HARLETH AND THE COMMUNITY OF WOMEN

by
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Re-reading literature from the perspective of Women's Studies, one often has the sense of having put on new glasses: what has always been present but unobserved suddenly comes into sharp focus. Using this lens it becomes possible for the reader to see that George Eliot's Daniel Deronda contains an important but previously overlooked theme, a theme which helps to unify the two "halves" of the novel. Just as Deronda must accept his place in the Jewish community in order to make his contribution to humanity, Gwendolen too must experience a rapprochement with her cultural heritage. A new reading of George Eliot's last novel reveals that a significant aspect of Gwendolen Harleth's moral limitations is the estrangement she feels from others of her sex, and her growth in stature is expressed in part by the desire to reconcile with the world of women.

When Gwendolen comes to Offendene she takes a dim view of her own sex. Glad to be in close proximity to her uncle, she hopes "that the family life would cease to be entirely insipidly feminine."[1] While she is strongly attached to her mother, she treats her with a combination of infantile selfishness and marked disdain. Gwendolen is convinced that she will manage marital matters better than did her mother whose two marriages were unhappy, and feels thoroughly superior to Mrs. Davilow's suffering. She has no interest in being part of female society: ". . . there were no beginnings of intimacy between her and the other girls. . . . Perhaps it was that she was not much interested in them, and when left alone in their company had a sense of empty benches" (Chapter 11). Seeing the powerlessness of women and their tendency to be victims, Gwendolen arrogantly refuses to identify with her sex. She feels "well equipped for the mastery of life," but in fact is unable to imaginatively transform the social forms pertaining to women, so there is no actual basis for her unique expectations"

> She rejoiced to feel herself exceptional; but her horizon was that of the genteel romance where the heroine's soul poured out in her journal is full of vague power, originality and general rebellion, while her life moves strictly in the sphere of fashion. . . . (Chapter 6)

Gwendolen has her first premonition that she has been mistaken in her condescension towards the sufferings of womankind when confronted by Lydia Glasher, Grandcourt's cast-off mistress. Lydia says, "You are very attractive, Miss Harleth. But when he first knew me, I too was young. Since then my life has been broken up and embittered" (Chapter 14). Gwendolen looks at her and feels terror: "it was as if some vision had come to her in a dream and said, 'I am a woman's life'" (Chapter 14). Unable to forget his image, Gwendolen first tries to run away from Grandcourt, but the pressure of her family's

reduced economic circumstances lead her ultimately to accept his proposal. Yet she is never able to obliterate Lydia's face, and when her suitor asks if any man stands between them, she thinks to herself, "'No; but there is a woman'" (Chapter 27). It is important that the first and crucial moral crisis Gwendolen Harleth experiences involves another woman. By rejecting identification with Lydia Glasher, Gwendolen sentences herself to a nightmarish fate as Grandcourt's wife. And so George Eliot shows us that women are a collective entity whose mutual vulnerability puts them in a unique moral relationship to one another.

Gwendolen's initial alienation from other women and her ultimate recognition that she is part of what the Victorians sometimes called "the suffering sisterhood" is conveyed metaphorically through references to birds and other small animals, and by related imagery. In Book One we are told that as a child Gwendolen strangled her sister's canary. Literature's conventional use of caged birds to represent women[2] as well as the place of this metaphor as part of a pattern of bird imagery in Daniel Deronda indicate that Gwendolen's murderous impulse is an expression of her anger at the restrictions women endure and her determination not to be part of such a victimized group. Most of the female characters in the novel are identified repeatedly with birds or other small animals who are prey to man. Anna Gascoigne is compared to a rabbit. Mr. Lush, referring to Lydia Glasher's residence at Glasmere, says, "there the nest is, and the birds are in it" (Chapter 36). Addy Cohen, one of the "Common" Jewish characters, is described as "a sort of parroquet in a bright blue dress" (Chapter 33). Mira, a singer, is of course continually identified with birds. She is "a nightingale" and "a half-reared linnet"; her words pour out of her "spontaneous as bird-notes," and her speech has "a dove-like note of melancholy." When not associated with birds, she is compared to "a fawn or other gentle animal before it turns to run away" (Chapter 17). Later she is "a fawn that Deronda saved from the archers" (Chapter 63).

Significantly, in the first part of the novel Gwendolen Harleth is not only an archer, but the best archer in the contest at Brackenshaw Park. Her confidence is at its zenith on the day she wins the gold star and meets the rich and eligible Grandcourt whom practically every girl at the contest is out to snare. She has yet to learn that despite her success at the game of archery she has more in common with the quarry than with those who do the hunting.

Early on Eliot has suggested metaphorically that Gwendolen does not know that she is in a cage. Commenting on the fact that she seeks an exceptional fate but has no intention of defying conventional codes, the narrator says:

> Here is a restraint which nature and society have provided on the pursuit of striking adventure; so that a soul burning with a sense of what the universe is not, and ready to take all existence as fuel, is nevertheless held captive by the ordinary wirework of social forms (emphasis mine) and does nothing in particular. (Chapter 5)

With the exception of this veiled reference, the first part of the novel is conspicuously devoid of images which suggest a comparison between Gwendolen

and the birds and small animals which have been used to describe the other women in the book; the lack of such images is especially striking when we remember that Gwendolen sings. However, after her female protagonist's marriage, George Eliot turns to familiar metaphors to present Gwendolen's reflections about her husband: "'He delights in making the dogs and horses quail: that is half his pleasure in calling them to him,' she said to herself. . . . 'It will come to be so with me; and I shall quail'" (Chapter 35).

Eliot is punning: Gwendolen will both learn to cower before Grandcourt, and she will also learn to identify with other women, who, like quail, are prey. As her suffering becomes more acute, she is imaged again and again as a bird or pathetic animal. She looks at Daniel "like a wounded animal asking help" (Chapter 36), she realizes that to resist her husband is "to act like a stupid animal unable to measure results" (Chapter 54), and after Grandcourt's death Deronda perceives her as "a lost, weary, storm-beaten doe, unable to rise and pursue its unguided way" (Chapter 56). The narrator tells us that Gwendolen is no more able to imagine Daniel's far-reaching concerns "than the reasons why men migrate are present to the birds that come as usual for the crumbs and find them no more" (Chapter 50).

In the opening scenes of Daniel Deronda, while Gwendolen gambles at the roulette table of a fashionable European spa, an observer comments, "'she has got herself up as a sort of serpent now, all green and silver, and winds her neck about a little more than usual'" (Chapter 1). In the course of the novel she moves up the evolutionary scale from reptile to bird (and even is imaged as a mammal at times) as she finds herself at the mercy of Grandcourt who himself is presented in reptilian metaphors. In Eliot's view such development represents spiritual progress, for human beings must become part of the Feurbachian "religion of suffering" in their struggle towards moral transcendence.

George Eliot's Feurbachian ideas about the value of suffering apply, of course, to men as well as women. In fact it is Daniel Deronda who serves as Gwendolen's mentor, explaining to her that she can use her anguish as an opportunity to learn sympathy and self-renunciation, qualities he possesses as a result of the pain he has undergone in relation to the mystery of his birth. The message applies to both sexes, but to George Eliot as to Auguste Comte, her humanist mentor, ". . . women was the purest embodiment of the emotional and moral element in human nature. . . ."[3] While the acceptance of suffering and self-abnegation and the cultivation of the faculty of sympathy are the highest human goals, women, Eliot believed, must accept their position in the vanguard of humanity's march towards these ideals; this position was probably theirs biologically, and it is certainly theirs by cultural heritage.

In Daniel Deronda we have an appealing image of female society. The Meyrick family, mother and three daughters, are an amiable group of women who are presented in scenes which suggest domestic tableaux. We see them reading aloud to one another while happily engaged in earning money for necessities by embroidering cushions and doing illustrations. This family of women is intelligent and cultured without being too intellectual, broad-minded enough to wholeheartedly embrace Mira although they know she is a Jewess, and "united by a triple bond--family love, admiration for the finest work, the best actions; and habitual industry" (Chapter 18). In other words, in George Eliot's view

their values are impeccable and in direct contrast to the preoccupation with material position and social status which afflicts the more fashionable characters of the novel, whose families are much less cozily unified. When Anna Gascoigne visits the Meyricks we are told:

> the visit had been arrangeo that Anna might see Mirah; the three girls were at home with their mother, and there was naturally a flux of talk among the six feminine creatures, free from the influence of a distorting male standard. (Chapter 52)

Thus Eliot emphasizes the feminine nature of the lives the Meyrick women lead.

Mrs. Meyrick is a perfect mother, and the world she has created for her girls is the standard against which we must place Mrs. Davilow and her five daughters. Gwendolen's family does not measure up very well. Her mother, although loving, is weak and unhappy, and her half-sisters are mere shadows to her, "four units utterly unimportant," whose existence has always been an embarrassment and an irritation. George Eliot's point is that Gwendolen lacks a positive womanly identity and correct values because she has been deprived of a cohesive and well-regulated female world. The fact that Gwendolen is not rooted in a community of women is paralleled by her lack of geographical roots, and both contribute to the flaws in her character.

Gwendolen Harleth's spiritual progress is marked by her growing sense of unity with suffering womankind, and this is conveyed not only in the novel's symbolic structure but also through her changed relationship with her mother and sisters. She begins to display a new tenderness for Mrs. Davilow after the family's financial losses, and the spiritual maturity which accompanies the torments of her marriage is revealed in part by the new consideration Gwendolen shows for her mother's feelings and welfare. Perhaps even more indicative of Gwendolen's reconciliation with women as a sex is a new attitude towards her "superfluous" sisters. She says to her mother, "'. . . make yourself as happy as you can with the girls. They are better children to you than I have been, you know'" (Chapter 44). Gwendolen gives her sisters thirty pounds, saying, "'I wish the girls would spend it on little things for themselves when you go to the new house. Tell them so'" (Chapter 44). At this stage Gwendolen "hardly understood her own feelings in this act towards her sisters. . ." but the reader is surely meant to understand it as a step towards sisterhood with all women.

Further evidence that Gwendolen's moral progress is related to acceptance of her cultural inheritance as a woman is its analogy with Deronda's quest. Daniel's discovery of his Jewishness gives his life the moral direction it lacked and provides him with a "vocation"--the attempt to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Similarly, in the final pages of the novel Gwendolen writes Daniel that she will remember his words urging her to be "one of the best of women, who makes others glad they were born." His words become her vow, a commitment which parallels Daniel's statement to Kalynomos: "'I shall call myself a Jew'" (Chapter 60).

Daniel has taught Gwendolen that she can "be among the best of women" by using her suffering to inform her love for others so that she will be in a

unique position to sympathize with their troubles and do what she can to offer relief. Daniel himself of course strives to live in accord with his advice to Gwendolen: men too should use anguish to learn empathy. But for women such an ideal has special import because society has traditionally assigned to them a special commitment to the good of others. George Eliot's attitude towards the roles of men and women is analogous to the relationship Mordecai insists should exist between Judaism and Christianity: "'Each nation has its own work, and is a member of the world, enriched by the work of each'" (Chapter 42). The importance of Gwendolen's taking her place in the community of women becomes manifest.

Notes

[1]George Eliot, The Works of George Eliot (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, n.d.), 24 vols., Cabinet edition, Daniel Deronda, Chapter 3. All further quotes from Daniel Deronda will be from this edition and will be cited within the text.

[2]See Ellen Moers, Literary Women (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1976) for an extended discussion of the caged bird metaphor and bird imagery in general in relation to women (pp. 245-251).

[3]Auguste Comte, A General View of Positivism, tr. J.H. Bridges (New York: Speller and Sons, 1957), p. 271.

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THE APPALACHIAN WOMAN: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STRAINS IN HARRIETTE ARNOW'S MOUNTAIN PATH

by
Frances Helphinstine

From her earliest novel, Mountain Path (begun in 1933), Harriette Louisa Simpson Arnow portrays what she describes as "the beginnings of a long story that stirred in me at times when I was a small girl hunting the family cows on Tyree's Knob above Burnside on the Cumberland (in Kentucky)."[1] In Mountain Path, Louisa Sheridan, a novice teacher, introduces the reader to life in the hills unaffected by centers of education and modern conveniences even twenty miles away in the county seat. Louisa captures the beauty of the countryside, of the log homes and open fires, and of the strengths of the woman that is center of the family that lives therein.

In later novels, Arnow traces the stages by which outside forces erode these primitive beauties of her native Cumberland region. Hunter's Horn (1949) depicts a hill community near the end of a graveled road where the outside world brings change to the home community and at the same time takes men and families away. Intervening farm and forestry programs provide free fertilizer but require fencing around the hay on which it is used. Because no means of earning cash is also provided, the ultimate cost for the fence for some is selling the cow by which the woman has previously assured family nutrition. For others, it is to move north lured by the promises of those desiring cheap labor forces. The Dollmaker (1954) continues the saga. A hill family living where the graveled road leads onto the highway is transplanted to a war-time housing development in Detroit by economic forces much as Harriette Arnow herself was. Although the combination of war and technology destroys the hill family's self-sufficient system of life, the Appalachian woman at center, Gertie Nevels, survives by using the inner strength and ingenuity characteristic also of Corie Calhoun in Mountain Path and Milly Ballew in Hunter's Horn.

Harriette Arnow's love for the Cumberland area and the people who live there permeates these novels and much of her other work as well. Her desire to know all she can about these people is evident in her extensive research on the Cumberland area which she has organized and interlaced with memories of the joys of the hills and valleys near Burnside for her social histories Seedtime on the Cumberland (1960), The Flowering of the Cumberland (1963), and Old Burnside (1977).

Because Arnow's first novel Mountain Path portrays the Cumberland area unaffected by any outside forces except a novice schoolteacher Louisa Sheridan, serving as narrator, and references to officers of the law desirous for bounties on moonshiners, it provides her purest picture of the richness of

the Cumberland. It might be termed autobiographical in the sense that Arnow drew on her experience as a beginning school teacher in a remote section of Pulaski County, Kentucky. With many parallels to Harriette Louisa Simpson, who at eighteen returned from Berea College, after two years, to begin teaching, the narrator Louisa Sheridan, native of the Bluegrass, describes her self-pity and fear as she travels to the remote spot where she is met by a trustee of the school district[2] Lee Buck Calhoun to be transported by mule along the winding limestone ridges to his home, a log structure, where she will live for the school year with his wife Corie and the children.

On her arrival Louisa describes the commodiousness of the Calhoun's log house, in terms similar to Arnow's description in Seedtime on the Cumberland of "homes far better than many homes today."[3] Louisa enters across a porch of a typical house to a door which looks across to a door leading to another porch. However, it is the central huge stone chimney with fireplace large enough to hold a whole tree trunk which catches her eye. Smooth worn limestone slabs form the hearth which is lined by a cedar churn with copper bands, chairs covered with sheepskins, and other products designed as need dictates through the whittling and carving skills of Lee Buck Calhoun. The spaciousness of the log home well accomodates the family. A door on one side of the fireplace leads to bedrooms. Three steps on the other side lead to the upstairs door. The upstairs bedroom, where Louisa resides, has a beautiful window view and a large fireplace. She details the children's gathering of new shucks to stuff a tick to provide a clean mattress for her bed.

However, Louisa, like Arnow, is most fascinated by the life-guiding force in this household, Corie Calhoun. Louisa admires this "reservoir of primitive strength and calmness" for her "hope and patience" (p. 214)[4] and her "gratefulness and thankfulness for all things." Corie appreciates each of life's blessings: dry wood, rain when the spring is low, cold snaps that cure up colds and make a spell for killing hogs, sunshiny days, snowy days (they mean good crops), hard frozen bare ground for it is then that the children do not wet their feet or ruin their shoes." Corie causes Louisa to want to "know these people and understand them" (p. 214).

Louisa defines the stages of her growing respect for Corie Calhoun. On entering the home, she first encounters Corie's ingenuity. When she meets Corie standing over apple butter colored by her home-grown sugar substitute, sorghum molasses, she is fascinated by Corie's ingenuity in preventing burns from the normal popping and spattering of cooking apple butter. Corie stands with a quilting rail, kept intact for future use, nailed to a stick serving as a spatter-proof stirrer with handle so long she can't bring it past the cupboard or lay it down without turning over the kettle of apple-butter.

Soon Louisa observes Corie's combined perseverance and ingenuity to bring pleasure to those in her household. As Christmas approaches, Louisa tells of the beautiful trees lighted with red candles and decorated with icicles and star-shaped cookies which children in the Bluegrass enjoy. To surprise Louisa, Corie uses everything at her disposal to replicate the verbal picture. She travels four miles there and four miles back, on foot, to trade a hog's liver to a neighbor who had killed a beef for tallow. Then using the only method tools at her disposal permit, she makes twelve candles. Using hot, not

boiling tallow, she dips well looped and twisted strands of twine six inches long, one at a time, into the kettle, taking care not to tallow the top of the loop by which she hangs the candle to a nail on the board which she holds. While the other candles are being dipped, the first one dipped hardens and is ready for another coating. Having no other coloring at her disposal, Corie uses whiskey killers, the bright red cinnamon drops available at the local store, to redden the final coat (pp. 241-242). Having neither the money to order nor the time to wait for a Sears, Roebuck star-shaped cookie cutter, she reasons that if paper patterns can be used for dresses, they can be used for cookies (p. 253). Folding a piece of paper peculiarly, cutting, unfolding, and cutting again, she makes a five-pointed star pattern which she places on the dough and cuts around with a knife. Then to complete Louisa's description, she finds the ill-smelling tobacco wrappers for the children to trim into slim icicles that can be carefully draped from the limbs of the tree. Louisa is so touched by the spirit with which Corie surmounts all obstacles in the process that she does not speak of how yellowish the candles are or the lack of fancy sugar decorations for the cookies. They are not the result of any lack of effort on Corie's part.

Rie, daughter and smaller version of Corie, has like ingenuity in using what is at hand to meet needs. When Louisa wishes the school had a globe, Rie looks at the unused pot-bellied stove and suggests that the class use colored chalk to draw on the continents. When they have finished, she with pride carries a pumpkin, because it is round and yellow, to school to use as the sun coming up around the stove globe. Although it takes Louisa three lessons to convince a child that sees the sun move across her own sky daily that the stove should go round the pumpkin and not the pumpkin around the stove, Rie responds, "We'll leave hit this way till we haf tu have a fire, then we'll make a punkin world, an' the stove'ull be th' sun cuz hit'll be hot" (p. 103).

Louisa follows their example when she compensates for the adopted textbooks the state department neglects to send by using "a Sears, Roebuck catalog as a text book in geography, and order blanks in the back as the basis for fascinating problems in arithmetic, and the section devoted to radios and electrical appliances as an encyclopedia eagerly read by children who have never seen a radio or an electric iron" (p. 282).

Although Louisa can imitate some of Corie Calhoun's traits, she can only describe others with respect. Typical of the Appalachian woman, Corie provides all the nutritional needs of her family by the labor of her own hands. Corie sees that the cow eats properly to provide the needed milk for the family, milks her on a regular morning and evening schedule, cools her milk in the spring, skims the sweet cream for churning fresh butter daily, and knows that milk left to clabber too long will ruin the flavor of her soda corn bread. Corie, likewise, keeps chickens for fresh eggs, and a sow with pigs for meat supply. Because there are no fenced lots, she sees that the animals are kept chased from the garden where she grows the yearly supply of vegetables. As the seasons come and go, she also gathers what nature provides. Louisa records the details as Corie makes wild-strawberry jam, huckleberry jam, dried apples, fodder beans, dried cornfield bean soup or directs the whole family in the three-day process of converting cane to molasses.

Corie's hands provide a cornucopia of delights evident as Corie responds to Louisa's request for a school Christmas party. Corie and the others spread their flour-sack sheets with a meat selection of all parts of the hog, beef, and chicken, boiled, baked and fried (p. 257), squirrel and rabbit. Their winter vegetables include hominy, white and sweet potatoes, and pickles made from cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, peaches, crab apples, green walnuts, and watermelon rind. They serve jellies and jams native to the valley, as apple, wild plum, grape, gooseberry, blackberry, huckleberry, peach, and cherry, and their traditional desserts: persimmon pudding, vinegar pie, sweet potato pie, buttermilk pie, and the better-known dried apple and pumpkin pies. Louisa acknowledges that molasses cakes and cookies, souse meat, sausage, and pumpkin butter are homely delicacies as traditional in Cal Valley as plum puddings or fruit cakes are in the Bluegrass. Although she introduces the Christmas tree, Louisa admires their traditions of gathering holly, mistletoe, and red dogwood berries for decorating the home, filling each child's stocking with the prize item of clothing or trinket for his delight, and cooking the best fare the women's efforts during the year can provide.

Although Corie Calhoun and the other women seem to define their sense of worth by how well they feed their families and provide for their needs, Louisa observes a more distinctive trait: generosity. The moment Louisa arrives Corie leaves her apple butter, which burns easily, to gather a quick snack of golden apples from her garden for one that must be hungry from traveling so far. Later as Christmas approaches, Corie desires to supplement Louisa's gifts of mistletoe and holly to her relatives in Lexington. Corie chooses her best unstrained honey, a quart of molasses, a large amount of fodder beans, and a peck of sun-dried apples. When Louisa's aunt returns a dressing gown she has had for years and never worn, Louisa sees how different are her aunt's giving because she has no need of the item (p. 234) and Corie's giving "wholeheartedly of things she could use and might at some time need."

Louisa describes Corie as one who whole-heartedly encounters life daily. Essential to Corie's success in gardening, in sun-drying foods, in caring for her family is her alertness to all of nature's signals. Although the Calhoun's have no running timepiece, Corie assures Louisa that all families in the valley judge school time as coming after milking time, sweeping the floors, washing the dishes, and getting the children ready for school. Although initially startled by "this vision of human clocks" (p. 58), Louisa soon also observes the hill shadows on the apple trees, the changing blues of the twilight, the dew fall, the sequence in which the whippoorwill call, then the frogs croak the stages of evening (pp. 50-51). She, too, becomes aware of signals of seasonal change as the slow drip of a fall rain that differs from the hard lively patter of summer showers (p. 208) or the even gray that spreads over the poplar leaves that were yesterday green and yellow (p. 146). As winter grows, she hears the trees on the hill crack with the cold (p. 270) and sits by the hearth to listen to the fire with Corie for a "scarcely audible 'pat, pat' like children's bare feet going quickly over ground" which signals falling weather (p. 344). On other occasions, she listens as Corie identifies which neighbor's dog is chasing what prey by the bark, the distinctive sounds of their crashing through tangles of mountain ivy, pine sapling, or some other flora of the valley (p. 221), and the speed with which the sound reveals the chase is progressing. Louisa wonders how, without any formal instruction, even the children can read the effects these signs and sounds of nature will

bring to their daily lives.

Louisa also notices how smoothly life in Cal Valley moves without the aid of formal instruction outside the school room. She observes that even the church is more an emotional and social outlet than an instrument guiding one in the principles of a better life. As women walk by carbide lamp, kerosene lantern, or pine knot to the small Hainted Cave church, they converse of the activities of their households. On arriving, the most zealous sit in the choir and sing melodies as "Far away beyond the starlit sky" or "I've got a brother gone to glory," which elicit shouting, sisterly love expressed in patting others on the back or wrapping one's arms about them. Many prayers then sermons from a series of preachers who seem to shriek themselves hoarse (p. 192) as they make every second sound a gasping "Ah" for breath follow. Finally, the choir women again sing as they go to members of their family sitting in the back or to their men gathered at the door to urge them to be converted now. When the service is over, the women return to their daily routines with little thought of what has transpired there except some comforting scripture for moments of trouble.

Louisa is touched deeply by the results of her survey into the possible causes that women dominate the church congregation. The local cemetery contains a large number of dead babies and young wives (p. 237) and a great many more old men than old women. Corie responds to her "Why?" with "Women folks has got hit awful hard" (p. 278). Doctors won't come unless the money is already in the hand, and the weather frequently prevents their coming. Some husbands in the name of religion leave "ever' thing to God's will" (p. 278) and refuse to have a doctor; and all women from economic necessity depend on a community mid-wife for the numerous child births. Louisa, like Arnow, sees how limited the possibilities for these women are.

Being left to dependence on self and one another for survival, the women in Cal Valley watch for signs of impending illness or death as carefully as they watch for nature's signs of changing weather patterns. Superstitions, therefore, surround their efforts to provide a healthy environment and medication for their families. Peripheral events of one woman's sorrow become superstition for all. For example, as Corie tries to relieve her child's rattling breathing with a lard and coal oil and turpentine poultice (pp. 319-320), an apple tree twig across the new moon becomes an omen of death, for she remembers Sally's seeing the new moon through a dead beech tree shortly before her Susie died. Or events on one rainy day cause Corie to hear the dead walking, a ghostly playing of the fiddle as when the last man in her family was killed, or the crying of an old man experiencing trouble on later rainy days.

Even the songs and ballads sung by the women in Cal Valley reflect their stoical acceptance that death follows life. Although the men fiddle, "Sow your wild oats in your youthful days," or sing "Ride around the canebrake an' shoot th' buffalo," Corie sings only songs as Barbrie Allen or The Drunkard's Grave.

Arnow's love for her native Cumberland area and its people are evident as Louisa at the end of the year in Cal Valley reflects on her pictures of

the time, feels them, hears them (p. 283) and concludes "these things are brighter than any she has found in books." Although attracted to the natural beauty of the valley, Louisa is driven back to the outside world by the economic poverty. She, like Arnow, is deeply touched by the realization that her pupil Rie will follow her mother[5] in "a life of fulfilling the biological pattern cut out for all things that were female and defenseless against ignorance and pain (p. 265)" . . . that Rie will "taste most of what any life has to offer--everything except happiness and success and comfort, and they are but the tinsel that make existence glitter for some; not life itself" (p. 286). She admires the fortitude of this Appalachian mother and daughter so involved in life itself. Yet the economic poverty of their existence leaves her no option but to leave behind the beauty unrivaled by anything in the outside world which they see when looking into the clouds or at a clump of bright maples or a nest of goldenrod.[6]

Notes

[1]Harriette Simpson Arnow, "Introduction," Mountain Path (Berea: Council of the Southern Mountains, 1963), p. 1.

[2]Milton Eckley, Harriette Arnow (New York: Twayne, 1974), pp. 33-34.

[3]Harriette Simpson Arnow, Seedtime on the Cumberland (New York: Macmillan, 1960), p. 272.

[4]All page notations within the text are from Harriette Simpson Arnow, Mountain Path, First Appalachian Heritage Edition (Berea: Council of the Southern Mountains, 1963).

[5]Eckley, p. 35.

[6]Excerpt from John Hill's review for Teacher Nov. 1936--

"the reader finds it in his heart only to respect and love these homely characters. One admires Corie, the wife of the head of the Calhoun Clan, with her religious fervor at the "meetin's" and strange philosophy of life, enduring hardships without complaint, stoical in times of great stress and danger, always grateful that things turned out better than she expected; one respects even the killers and shiners, victims of training and tradition, for their gentleness and kindness to their women folk and children; one loves young Chris who so loves life and yet must go to his death or lose his self respect. Miss Simpson has vividly portrayed the joys and sorrows of the hill people, and with artistic pictures of the beauties of mountain stream and moonlit nights has softened the hardness of their primitive living."

John Hill (Editorial Board for Southern Baptist Convention), Letter to Mr. Lemon (A.J. Holman Co.), 31 December 1936, Harriette Arnow Papers, Box 1, Margaret I. King Library, Lexington, Ky.

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The Marchesa and Ligiea: Possibly Poe's Parodies?

by
Sara Culver

The picture of the fragile, flowerlike woman is carried to such extremes in at least two of Poe's tales that I almost suspect him of parodying the stereotype of the southern lady. Such exaggerations of ethereal spirituality as the Marchesa of "The Assignation" or Ligiea in the story of the same name, lead me to wonder if Poe might not have had his tongue firmly in his cheek while he was describing them.

The Marchesa Aphrodite isn't even a woman, she's a statue:

> ". . . no motion in the statue-like form itself stirred even the folds of the raiment of very vapor which hung around it as the heavy marble hangs around Niobe."[1]

Only that could explain the narrator's tremulous excitement at seeing her reactions when her child is restored to her:

> "And the Marchesa! Her lip--her beautiful lip trembles: tears are gathering in her eyes--those eyes which, like Pliny's acanthus, are 'soft and almost liquid.' Yes! tears are gathering in those eyes--and see! the entire woman thrills throughout the soul, and the statue has started into life! The pallor of the marble countenance, the swelling of the marble bosom, the very purity of the marble feet, we behold suddenly flushed over. . ." (Davidson, p. 72)

Tears from a statue: Wow! She hasn't even been excited into motion by her baby's drowning (or near-drowning; after an improbably long submersion, it's fished up alive). At the beginning of the incident, the narrator had heard a shriek, but from the Marchesa's ensuing behavior, one doubts that it emanated from her; while others are frantically trying to retrieve the moppet, she doesn't flicker an eyelash. Ladies, especially southern ladies, were supposed to be demure and quiet in demeanor, but considering the circumstances, I think she overdoes it a bit. Perhaps her sole function is to provide illumination for the rescue operations. She seems to be the only lightsource; all Poe's descriptions of her refer to her radiance:

> "Her hair. . . clustered, amid a shower of diamonds, round and round her classical head, in curls like those of a young hyacinth." (Davidson, p. 71)

Her eyes are "lustrous," her "delicate frame" is compared to "rich silver

lilies"; her feet shine like silver against the black marble floor. In fact, the Marchesa hangs upon the cheek of night like an arc-lamp.

Ligiea is the more ethereal of the two ladies, even frighteningly spiritual; she seems to be a passe-muraile or completely vapor:

> "She came and departed as a shadow. I was never made aware of her entrance into my closed study save by the dear music of her low sweet voice, as she placed her marble hand upon my shoulder." (Davidson, p. 81)

Brrr! Apparently she is of a less concrete marble than the Marchesa. Poe devotes one and a half pages to the description of Ligiea's eyes; I was especially taken with this passage:

> "And there are one or two stars in heaven--(one especially, a star of the sixth magnitude, double and changeable, to be found near the large star in Lyra) in a telescopic examination of which I have been made aware of the feeling." (Davidson, p. 83)

If he's not putting us on here, he could be. Even better than Ligiea's eyes, however, are her teeth:

> ". . .the teeth glancing back, with a brilliancy almost startling, every ray of the holy light which fell upon them in her serene and placid yet most exhaultingly radiant of all smiles." (Davidson, p. 82)

In spite of her teeth, Ligiea is at least spared the fate of the unfortunate Berenice.

The heroine of "Morella" seems to be a continuation of the indefatigable Ligiea; she too, is a lady of vast and occult learning, but the narrator seems to be less than charmed by her personality; in fact, she is beginning to get on his nerves:

> "And then--then, when pouring over forbidden pages, I felt a forbidden spirit enkindling within me--would Morella place her cold hand upon my shoulder. . .hour after hour, would I linger by her side, and dwell upon the music of her voice--until, at length, its melody was tainted with terror,--and there fell a shadow upon my soul--and I. . .shuddered inwardly at those too unearthly tones. . . .thus, joy suddenly faded into horror. . ."[2] (Poe, p. 29)

and further:

> ". . . the mystery of my wife's manner oppressed me as a spell. I could no longer bear the touch of her wan finger, nor the low tone of her musical language, nor the luster of her melancholy eyes."

Predictably, Morella is just as hard to get rid of as Ligiea.

Of course, in telling a ghastly tale, it is useful to have ghastly characters. But while Ligiea and Morella both give the reader fair warning that they will return, nothing about Lady Madeline of Usher warns us of her Houdini-like capabilities. She is presented to the reader so frail as to be practically a ghost, emaciated by her lingering illness, yet she pulls off an escape that would make Wonder Woman positively green with envy. After being secured in her coffin (the lid screwed down) and locked in an iron vault, she still manages to get out (ripping and cracking the coffin in the process) and her brother is understandably put out by her reappearance.

But all this would be extremely difficult to prove; Poe tended to exaggerate anyway in order to create whatever mood he wished to establish. The frequent repetition of certain adjectives may have been only to emphasize certain qualities or characteristics of the heroines. The very fact that Poe's consumptive ladies were not interpreted as parodies says something both about the gothic tradition and the way his culture perceived women.

Footnotes

[1]Davidson, Edward H., ed., Selected Writings of Edgar Allan Poe, Riverside Editions, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1956), p. 71.

[2]Poe, Edgar Allan. Tales of Mystery and Imagination, (New York: Brentanos), pp. 28-29.

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THE "GRIM DANCE": A STUDY OF MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CORPUS CHRISTI CYCLES

by
Veena P. Kasbekar

> These men that are wed have not their own will,
> When full bitter they have sped their tongue they keep still;
> God knows they are led in a grim dance full ill;
> In bower and in bed, but speak not their fill
> Nor chide.
>
> "Second Shepherd's Play," Wakefield Cycle.[1]

According to the Corpus Christi cycles of Wakefield, York, Chester, and the Ludus Coventriae, the theme of the battle of the sexes goes back to Adam and Eve. The relationship of the first couple seems to have borne the seeds not only of the future generations of humankind but also of universal marital discord. The couples in these Mystery plays can be seen as partners in a dance, where, by the rules of the game, the lead should be taken by the male. However, it is the women who seem constantly striving to lead the men, while at the same time keeping control over their own movements. In so doing, they are reversing their designated positions in the Christian hierarchy of "maistrye," where, as V.A. Kolve has pointed out, the woman is subject to the man, and is his "underlyng," just as man himself is subordinate to God and the angels.[2]

This curse falls on woman through the "fault" of Eve. Not content with presuming to God's position herself by eating of the forbidden fruit of knowledge, she tempts Adam to violate his relationship with God too. God is wrath. Thou shalt have no other God but me. Therefore he punishes Eve by transferring the bearing of children, in pain, to her, and charging her that

> the man shall mayster thee alwaye,
> and under his power thou shalt be aye.
>
> Chester Cycle[3]

Thus woman came to be regarded as the weaker vessel, both physically and morally; she is constantly chided in the Corpus Christi cycles for her sex-related vices. In the Chester cycle, however, we find the otherwise robust Mrs. Noah piously capitalizing on this debility, to escape the more strenuous labor involved in building the ark:

> And we shall bring timber to,
> for wee mon nothing els do;
> women be weake to undergoe
> any greate travayle (p. 50)

Of course, differences in capacity did not count; because of Eve's sin of disobedience and pride (presumption), all women were relegated to a secondary position to man in the Christian hierarchy. But then God himself temporarily upset the order by entering into the married but virginal Mary, and making her the earthly mother of Christ, his son. In one of the cycles he comes down to her as a dove, and, except for the fact that Mary is willing, this Christian myth, in its superficial story of God alighting on a mortal woman, resembles the classical myth of Zeus' divine rapes of mortal women, for instance of Leda, in the guise of a snow-white swan, and Europa, in the form of a "gentle" bull. Significantly, Mary remains a virgin, unlike her Greek prototypes. In human terms, she is guilty of adultery, but because her conception is divine, she is elevated <u>over</u> her husband Joseph, both by Christian theology and in the Corpus Christi drama.

Poor Joseph is at first unaware of these extenuating circumstances. Just as Adam had blamed his wife Eve for sinning and involving him in her sin, Joseph blames <u>his</u> wife, Mary, for adultery and for making him a cuckold. Adam had been overcome with shame at his nakedness; the York Joseph is mad with shame at the unenviable position brought on him by Mary, through no fault of his own: "I dare look no man in the face."[4]

The Wakefield Joseph reacts more sorrowfully; knowing that he is old and past the age of "play," he suspects that Mary, with the weakness of her youth and sex, has given in to the heat of her blood. He does not blame her, but is irked by her refusal to admit her guilt and by her presumption in aspiring to be God's wife. In all the cycles, Joseph warns the old men in the audience against marrying young women, to avoid being cuckolded by them. But he is stopped from deserting his wife by an angel who confirms Mary's innocence; Joseph therefore returns to beg his wife's forgiveness. The York Mary, with wifely subordination, brushes aside his apology as immaterial, but the Wakefield Mary, as Eleanor Prosser points out, forgives him in specifically Christian terms: "God forgives as I do thee" (p. 185).[5]

The <u>Ludus Conventriae</u> Joseph is so overcome by his wife's magnanimity and goodness that he sinks into pure uxoriousness:

> Gramercy myn own swete wyff
> Gramercy myn hert my love my lyff
> Xal I nevyr more make suche stryff
> be-twyx me and pe.[6]

So Joseph and Mary reach a happy marital resolution and though in the future, as in the flight to Egypt, Joseph is to complain (like Noah) of the tasks God forces on him in his old age, it is never with bitterness. He emerges as an old but very human figure, occasionally indulging in semi-senile grumblings at the burdens of his husbandly duties, while Mary sweetly hears him out. She clearly has the upper hand, but in her goodness (or feminine shrewdness?) is undesirous of showing it.

So Mary, although a woman, is, in reality, <u>above</u> her husband in the hierarchy. It is little wonder then, that not only her pre-figurations, but most of the married women in the Corpus Christi cycles, refuse to accept

their inferior positions and constantly battle with their husbands for "maistr/e," although they are finally subdued. This dichotomy leads to contrary behavioral responses in the women, as seen by a comparison of the response of the Ludus Conventriae and York Eves to the Fall. The former is overcome by remorse: "My husband is lost because of me" (p. 28). The York Eve, on the other hand, reacts to Adam's accusation of her guilt with a tart response:

> Since it was so, it frets me sore.
> But since that woman witless were
> Man's mastery should have been the more
> Against the guilt (p. 39).

Adam has no answer to this and feebly reasserts her dearth of "wit." It is clear that along with the fig leaves, Eve was also trying on his breeches.

In her turn, Mrs. Noah (except for the Ludus Coventriae one) picks up this behavioral cue from both Mary and Eve and seems determined, like Shylock in another context, that "it shall go hard but I will better the instruction."[7] According to Kolve, besides her obviously comic role, she also has a dramatic role in the philosophy of the play. The chaos in the macrocosm, brought about by God's wrath at man's insubordination to him, is reflected by Mrs. Noah in the microcosm of her relationship with her husband. In the Chester and Wakefield cycles, she exchanges fisticuffs and shrewish words with Noah, while refusing to get into the ark. In the Chester and York cycles, however, she demonstrates an unexpected humanity in refusing to save herself while leaving her gossips and kinfolk to their death.

The Wakefield Noah proves a verbal match for her: "Hold thy tongue, ramshit, or I shall still thee" (p. 95). But the Chester Noah self-pityingly cites Mrs. Noah to the audience as an example of how "crabbed" all women are. With henpecked submission, he pleads to her to get into the ark, conceding his superior position to her:

> For all they wene <u>thou</u> art master,
> and so thou art by St. John (emphasis mine, p. 52).

But Mrs. Noah will not come in until she has had a final fellowship of song and drink with her gossips.

Once she enters the ark, however, she is chastened and subdued; as things begin to fall into their God-ordained order, her previously rude appelations for Noah are replaced by a respectful "Sir" (Wakefield, p. 104). Furthermore, as the ark touches land again, the York Mrs. Noah brings in a moment of unexpected pathos as she contemplates on the fate of all their "kynne and companye" destroyed by the flood. Although there is a new world without her, the old world is still <u>with</u> her; as such, she remains an affectionate female type that even God's vengeance on his first world could not erase. In her comic insubordination to her husband and her tremendous vitality, she presents a (somewhat primitive) parallel to the delightfully humorous portrait of Chaucer's Wife of Bath. Kolve calls Mrs. Noah Everyman's wife because of the (supposedly) universal nature of her comic shrewishness, but she is

redeemed by her boisterous humanity and colorful language, which contrast sharply with old Noah, who, according to her, is "schreeching ever of sorrow" (Wakefield, p. 95).

Noah's description of women as "crabbed" seems amply supported by the second shepherd's unhappy account of his wife's character. Just as Noah and his wife had appealed to the audience against the negative qualities of their mates, the second shepherd too cites the example of his wife, to dissuade the young men in the audience from marriage. Besides possessing a "gallon of gall," she is

> As sharp as a thistle, as touch as a spear,
> She is browed like a bristle, with a sour looking cheer (p. 210).

One wife leads him a grim enough dance; he is amazed at men who marry two or three wives: they must constantly be on their toes.

The second shepherd's anti-uxorious tone is taken up by Mac against his lazy wife Gill, in the Wakefield cycle. Mac and Gill have their quarrels too, but, as a pair of comic villains, they are perfect correlatives of each other, even to the extent of croaking their lullaby "so clean out of tune" together. When Mac accuses his wife of laziness, she sententiously enumerates her duties:

> Why, who works, and who wakes, who comes and who goes? [VI]
> Who brews and who bakes? Who darns all your hose? (p. 222)

But Mac knows that she is ever groaning and "picking at her toes" whenever he asks anything of her.

Furthermore, Gill seems to be always with child, and with so many bairns to feed, the larder is always empty. So Mac steals a sheep from the three shepherds and Gill devises a way of hiding it--in her own bed as her newborn child. Although Adam had sternly advised men to shun the counsel of women, Mac cannot resist admiring his wife's ingenuity: "What a woman may say can help at the last" (p. 219). And later, when the three shepherds search his cottage for their sheep, he keeps up a show of solicitous concern for his wife's condition, while both of them promise, with almost black humor, to eat the newborn "child" if they prove liars and thieves. But villainy will out; Gill's plan is foiled, and the shepherds carry away their sheep after meting out a rough justice to Mac. This incident of Mac and Gill and their "child" is a comic foil to both the seriousness and the joy of the true birth of Christ, and hence has a definite dramatic and didactic purpose. However, its human appeal to its audience probably lay in its comic presentation of the familiar battle of the sexes, an ever-popular medieval theme.

The battle is noticeably raging in these plays; and, in most cases, it leads to a fervent, albeit mock-serious, wish on the part of the protagonists that the other partner be dead. This wish is voiced by Mac, by the second shepherd, and especially by Mrs. Noah, who, in continuing the metaphor of the marital dance, is quite certain that

> For the dance they are led
> [Most women] Wish their husbands were dead.
> (Wakefield, p. 101)

These frequently expressed death-wishes for their mates are, however, to be taken in the comic vein rather than otherwise. In all the four cycles, there is only one instance where this wish is seriously meant, not out of bitterness or hatred but out of a genuine sense of sin. Joseph, in the Wakefield cycle, feels Mary should have killed herself as a repentence for her "adultery," but an angel soon puts things in their proper perspective for him.

It must be pointed out that the above examples constitute the major, and not the total impression of married life in these cycles. Noah's daughters-in-law are completely obedient to their husbands and to Noah; the Ludas Coventriae cycle shows Mary's parents, Anna and Joachim, as a loving couple, as are the York Pilate and his wife, although on a more comic scale.

It has been seen, then, that except for Mary, who by virtue of her divine conception is somewhat idealized, all the other couples in the Corpus Christi cycles are flesh and blood creatures, basically good in spite of their squabbling, and very recognizable medieval country types to the audience that flocked to see them for over a hundred years. In their earthiness and vitality, the women especially are noticeably different from the pale heroines of medieval Romance and courtly literature; Mrs. Noah is certainly no patient Griselde, and we are glad this is so.

Thus the couples--Adam and Eve, Noah and his uxor, Joseph and Mary, Mac and Gill--tied to each other for better or for worse, go through their paces on the medieval pageants; and, in their complete identification with the dance of both the Corpus Christi drama and ultimately of life itself, they seem to offer a healthy refutation to the grimmer medieval picture of the Dance of Death.

Notes

[1]Martial Rose, ed., The Wakefield Mystery Plays (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), p. 209.

[2]V.A. Kolve, The Play Called Corpus Christi (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 147.

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"SISTER SHADOW"
SUSAN FERRIER, NOVELIST (1782-1856)

by
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"More than one writer has of late displayed talents of this description and if the present writer, himself a phantom, may be permitted to distinguish a brother or perhaps a sister shadow, he could mention in particular the author of the very lively work entitled Marriage" (Epilogue to Tales of My Landlord at close of The Legend of Montrose--Sir W. Scott). What did Susan Ferrier write about? Morals, Manners and Educational Zeal! And what is to us her most successful novel? Probably it is Marriage. One hundred and fifty years ago, critics were almost unanimous in praising the Scottish portrait gallery in Marriage and in condemning the flimsiness of plot. Today Marriage is the favorite among the three novels. Whereas The Inheritance and Destiny were prized then for their superior handling of plot, by which critics meant mystery and melodrama, contemporary opinion credits Susan Ferrier for presenting gradations of marriage through contrasts, comparisons analogues and juxtapositions. The moral impulse drives the plot forward, as characters are rewarded or punished, into some kind of narrative cohesion, and manners give a sense of reality.

Setting too is used in strong polarity; the glowing colours of Argyll and its strange black hills, hateful to the first heroine of Marriage, the petulant English beauty, Lady Juliana, because of their association with her Scots husband's family at Glenfern, actually supported and consoled Mary, the second heroine, when she recalled them, in the stifling hot-house atmosphere of the English Beechpark. Glenfern itself, rude and archaic, contrasts with the pleasant, cultivated garden estate of the civilized and rational Major and Mrs. Archibald Douglas at Lochmarlie Cottage. Life at Beechpark near Bath with indolent opulence is also countered by the Christian moderation of old Mrs. Lennox's home at Rose Hill. Susan Ferrier's vivid picture of the enervating wealth and extravagance of the Courtlands' fashionable and elegant households reminds us that Marriage, apart from being a novel of manners and of education, is in the Fashionable Novel genre as well.

Susan Ferrier's three novels present pictures of Scottish life and character between 1797 and 1831 that were drawn by one who knew the Scottish castle and its laird as intimately as Maria Edgeworth understood her hard-riding, hard-gaming, hard-drinking Irish landowners, or as Jane Austen perceived the English country gentry of parsonage and parkland.

Marriage (1818), however, would not have seen the light of day any more than John Galt's Annals of the Parish (1821) or J. G. Lockhart's Adam Blair (1822)--all presenting Scottish manners--had not the anonymous Waverley been published in 1814 and with its phenomenal success turned the tide in favor of 'Scotch' novels. After this, southern readers were curious to know what went on up there--north of the Border! Sir Walter, the 'Great Unknown' author of the Waverley novels, had solved the problem of a Scottish novel by turning to the past; the Scotland of history could be assessed in language and manners more readily than in a time of transition as in 1797 to 1831. Yet Scott was perspicacious enough to realize where the domestic novel [that had its origin in Fanny Burney's Evelina (1778) and would reach its maturity with Vanity Fair (1848)] was heading. In his review of Jane Austen's Emma for the Quarterly Review (1815) he observed that novel-writing had ceased "to paint the idealized figures of romance" and from then on would present "a correct and striking representation of that which is daily taking place around." Scott really only once tried his hand at delineating contemporary Scottish manners in St. Ronan's Well (1826). He had even been pleased that Marriage (published anonymously) had been attributed to him.

Thus the intervening years between the writing of the first chapters of Marriage and the actual publication in 1818, while they gave Susan Ferrier an opportunity to expand and develop the narrative, also produced a ready-made market for the new novel of realistic manners. The time was ripe and so was the girl.

But who inspired her to write? The Ferriers moved in distinguished circles; they came of a good family of small landowners in Renfrewshire. Susan's father, James Ferrier, a lawyer (Writer to the Signet) was, through a Campbell connection, made manager of the great estates of John, fifth Duke of Argyll, who procured for him appointment as one of the Principal Clerks of the Court of Session (a Supreme Court) where he had Walter Scott as colleague. The house of Argyll, famous in Scottish history for its political power, was an open one to the Ferriers and it was really through her friendship with Lady Charlotte Campbell and Miss Clavering the sister and niece of the fifth Duke, that Susan was encouraged and almost prompted to become a novelist; indeed, it was Lady Charlotte who introduced 'the contagion of proof-sheets.' It was natural then that Argyllshire with its castles, its hill-shadowed lochs and flaming sunsets should be the Highland back-drop in Susan's novels and that aristocratic life described in them should be the one familiar to her at Inverary Castle, the Campbell seat.

The Highlands, Edinburgh, Bath and London were the settings for Susan Ferrier's presentation of Scots manners. Perhaps, however, despite Sir Walter Scott's efforts to renew royal pageantry with the entry of George IV into Edinburgh, brilliant society tended to congregate in London, and though a certain style was kept up in the Scottish capitol with much good talk at those snug 'deipnosophistic' supper parties, it was celebrated at times with depleted ranks and a kind of anxious gentility. The Misses Clavering of the day enjoyed their London season. In her early letters therefore, Susan Ferrier is seen "busied in the Arts/Sciences of japanning old boxes, varnishing new ones, daubing velvet, and in short, as the old wives say, my hands never out of an ill turn. Then by way of fashion I play whist every night to the very death with all the dusty dowagers and musty mousers in the purlieus--and yet I am alive! Praise be to oysters and porter" (Correspondence, p. 76).

No wonder that there is such a crop of humorous old ladies in her novels! So much vitality was ready to be harnessed and there was a natural aptitude for writing. "For know I am descended from a race of Scribes. I was born amidst briefs and deeds. I was nurtured upon ink" (Correspondence, p. 82).

The genesis of Marriage has its own interest. Perhaps it was Miss Clavering, who, enjoying the vivacity of these early letters, foresaw a novelist in Susan Ferrier. Round about the year 1809-10, when Susan, according to well-qualified opinion, had grown quite handsome, vastly sensible and agreeable, there were hints in her correspondence of an interesting, new project. "Your proposals flatter and delight me, but how in the name of postage are we to transport our brains to and fro?" (Correspondence, p. 45).

Apparently the work was to be undertaken jointly but the two girls had different aims. Susan is definite on the object of the book and a trait of character that she reveals when stating her purpose in writing, seems opposed to her boisterous irrepressible mirth. "Part of your plot I like much, some not quite so well--for example it wants a moral." . . . "Yet, I think where there is much tribulation, 'tis fitter it should be the consequence rather than the cause of misconduct and frailty." . . . "But as the only good purpose of a book is to inculcate morality and convey some lesson of instruction as well as delight, I do not see that what is called a good moral can be dispensed with in a work of fiction."

Moreover despite the fact that women could hold their own in that robust society, there was a curious suggestion of indelicacy attached to novel-writing as a métier for women. The odium connected with a 'blue-stocking' reputation was an added discouragement. A general warning came from a strange source. 'Monk' Lewis, one of the eminent guests of the Campbells, wrote as follows: "I hear it rumoured that Miss Ferrier doth write novels, or is about making one. I wish she would let such idle nonsense alone, for, however great a respect I may entertain for her talents (which I do) I tremble lest she should fail in this book-making, and as a rule I have an aversion, a pity, and contempt for all female scribblers. The needle, not the pen, is the instrument they should handle, and the only one they ever use dexterously. I must except however, their true love-letters, which are sometimes full of pleasing conceits" (Scott's Letters, Vol. 1, p. 109).

'Monk' Lewis had no chance to air 'his aversion, pity or contempt,' or to make a new assessment of Susan Ferrier's talents, for he died in 1818, the year in which her first novel Marriage was published, but it was not until 1851 that the novelist submitted to have her name prefixed to Bentley's edition of her works.

And so it was with a conspiratorial air that Susan Ferrier and her friend corresponded about Marriage. It was early on when Susan realized that her friend Miss Clavering and she simply could not write the novel together--"but as to writing with you, in truth, it would be easy to compound a new element out of fire and water as that we two should jointly write a book." Henceforth apart from contributing the history of Mrs Douglas (Chapter XIII, Marriage, p. 65) Miss Clavering took no part in thecomposition beyond giving sensible criticism and advice as when she suggested that a realistic picture

of fashionable London life would be dull indeed with everyone conforming to the mode appearing in previous novels.

Most evidently, Susan Ferrier was also a moralist. In being a moralist she found great fun. Since the days when the Scots schoolmaster, Robert Henryson, had undertaken to punish Cressеid in his "Testament," the Scot has from time to time revealed his love for a moral, his ideas on the just retribution of the wicked. Moreover, the Evangelicalism of the period was hardening into a narrow and rigorous creed. As Susan Ferrier grew older, she became more caustic. "Her satire which began with intellectual contempt for fools and a keen sense of superficial absurdities grew more and more into a denunciation of whatever was not ascetic" (Macmillan's Mag., Vol. 49, p. 419). But to begin with, anyway, she laughed heartily at the fools.

Apart from this natural corrective bent, Susan Ferrier had behind her a century of literature with a distinctive moral and didactic tone--"to inculcate morality and convey some lesson of instruction as well as delight" had been the inspiring motive of periodic and fictional literature from Addison's and Steele's Spectator essays to Richardson's and MacKenzie's novels. Moreover Susan Ferrier had found a model in the 17th century French writer La Brunyère, author of the moralistic "Les Caractères," quotations from which adorn her chapter headings. Part of Les Caractères was a collection of self-contained maxims, reflections and character portraits of men and women with naturally no connected plan. Fortified by all this reading and by her Presbyterian zeal she turned to propound a moral with zest and as long as the zest is there the moralizing is fairly palatable to the modern reader. But we could do without the trite summing up of conduct and a few dreary homilies dispensed throughout.

However the approach to her first novel Marriage was more light-hearted. Writing in high spirits to Miss Clavering she discloses in certain excitement a situation that she has found, sufficiently piquant and productive of a moral!

"I do not recollect ever to have seen the sudden transition of a high-bred English beauty who thinks she can sacrifice all for love to an uncomfortable solitary Highland dwelling among tall red-haired sisters and grim-faced aunts. Suppose each of us try our hands on it; the moral to be deduced is to warn all young ladies against runaway matches, and the character and fate of the two sisters would be unexceptionable" (Correspondence, p. 76).

A significant condition is attached to the whole proposal: "One thing let me entreat of you; if we engage in this undertaking let it be kept a profound secret from every human being. If I was suspected of being accessory to such foul deeds my brothers and sisters would murder me and my father bury me alive" (Correspondence, p. 77).

Although her father was later to be excessively proud of his gifted daughter, this shrinking from publicity was no adopted pose. She was well aware that her human models might resent their inclusion among her satiric portraits. Marriage consists of three main marriages with others examined in passing; first the petulant, spoiled English beauty Lady Juliana is

engaged, through her father's arrangement, to an elderly squint-eyed Duke. Despite His Grace's "exquisite taste in trinkets," "the smiling eyes, curling hair and finely formed person of a certain captivating Scotsman" win the day, and the seventeen-year old Lady Juliana elopes with the gallant young soldier, Henry Douglas, to Scotland (Marriage, Vol. I, p. 57).

"Will ye gang to the Hielan's, Leezie Lyndesy,
My bride and my darling to be."

So far, it was the Lord McDonald theme, but in place of the "ever and ever" of the ballads, Susan Ferrier gives the lovers two months of bliss and illusion, and then, in pursuance of her warning to all young persons who indulge in runaway matches, she unfolds the consequences of this hasty union. "The enamoured husband began to suspect that the lips of his 'angel Juliana' could utter very silly things" while the food bride on her part discovered that though her "adored Henry's figure was symmetry itself, yet it certainly was deficient in a certain air--a je ne scais quoi--that marks the man of fashion" (Marriage, Vol. II, p. 59).

As Henry has resigned from the army and has no means to support his bride, he is obliged to take her as soon as possible to the Douglas ancestral castle of Glenfern, which he himself has not visited for many years. Fortified by dreams of a Watteau rusticity complete with fêtes champêtres, Lady Juliana, accompanied by English abigail, footman, two dogs, squirrel, monkey and husband, leaves Edinburgh for the Highlands.

The arrival is most graphic: the tall thin gray house, small sullen lake, rugged hills and gray dykes, as seen on a raw November day when their carriage halts on the summit of the road leading down into the glen, strike the pleasure-loving pair with chill foreboding. The decayed retainer old Donald ushers them into the long, low-roofed drawing room, reeking with the smoke of a newly lighted fire, scantily and shabbily furnished, with small windows that are more effectual in letting in the driving rain and wind than in clearing off the smoke; "high backed chairs adhered most pertinaciously to the gray walls, on which hung in narrow black frames, some of the venerable ancestors of the Douglas family" (Marriage, Vol. I, p. 67). The family is waiting to greet them! "At the entrance of the strangers a flock of females rushed forward to meet them. Douglas good-humouredly submitted to be hugged by three long-chinned spinsters whom he recognized as his aunts; and warmly saluted the five awkward, purple girls he guessed to be his sisters; while Lady Juliana (already quite unnerved by the terrors of Highland scenery) stood the image of despair, and, scarcely conscious, admitted in silence the civilities of her new relations." The Laird, who had been hastily summoned from his farming operations, now entered. "He was a good-looking old man, with something the air of a gentleman, in spite of the inelegance of his dress, his rough manner and provincial accent. After warmly welcoming his son, he advanced to his beautiful daughter-in-law, and, taking her in his arms, bestowed a loud and hearty kiss on each cheek; then observing the paleness of her complexion, and the tears that swam in her eyes, 'What! Not frightened by our Hieland hills, my leddy? Come, chin up--trust me, ye'll find as warm hearts among them as any ye ha'e left in your fine English policies'--shaking her delicate fingers in his hard muscular grip as he spoke" (Marriage, Vol. I., p. 13).

On escaping to her room, Lady Juliana finds her lady's-maid, outraged at the servants' quarters in Glenfern castle and determined to return to England in the chaise that brought the party. Lady Juliana has never dressed herself in her life, her sisters-in-law are almost as helpless with the profusion of lovely gowns; we are told that they themselves wore good solid dark stays, which were apt to show between skirt and bodice when "they rushed in from their tom-boyish outdoor amusements only just in time to scramble into their clothes for dinner." Henry, fortunately, proves more adroit at lady's-maiding than his sisters to Juliana's childish rapture. Dinner passes off reasonably well--the Laird's mutton and grouse are fit for even a dainty appetite--but Lady Juliana becomes hysterical when the piper is called 'cheeks ready blown' and the bag-pipes break into a reel, while the Laird calls genially to his five boyden daughters--'Whar's the girlies? Ho! Belle, Becky, Betty, Baby, Beeny--to your posts!'

The breakfast table the next morning, redolent of old cheese and herrings, with piled up plates of barley-meal scones and peace bannocks, is a terrible ordeal: a faint request for chocolate and muffins, or even toast, is met with the reply that the Castle 's out of loaf bread.

The only entertainment proposed is a walk, for which the aunts make awesome preparations, and press upon Lady Juliana a tartan cloak and hood, old bonnets, fur tippets, hair soles, clogs and pattens; but she insists on braving the weather in a lace cap, lilac satin pelisse and silk slippers while they in dismay, prognosticate "ruin to the whole race of Glenfern present and future" (Marriage, Vol. I, p. 97).

Susan Ferrier was mimicking living creatures as well as making fast impressions of a bygone day. The prototypes of the three Aunts in Marriage were the Misses Edmondstone, neighbors and friends of the Ferriers. Many traits such as "their bustling good nature--tiresome at times," "so brimful of charity that every new sentiment or emotion was quite sunk" are there in Miss Jacky, Miss Grizzy and Miss Nicky. Nearly always Susan Ferrier writes of them with amusement and lurking irritation (Correspondence, p. 44).

"She is gone to dine with the Edmondstones who give a fete previous to Mrs. Halliday and Delmeny setting out on a tour to visit some old friends who they think must be dropping off--indeed they seem rather provoked at people for being ill."

Reminiscent of the three Aunts' gratification at the expected birth of an heir to the house of Douglas is the following: "They are in great delight at having it announced that Sir Archibald's lady is to add a twig to the family tree and is to come here for the purpose that it may be a Scotch plant." "Only look at those young lambs," says Miss Grizzy to Marriage pointing to the five great girls: "see what pictures of health they are! I'm sure I hope my dear niece, your children will be just the same--only boys for we are sadly in want of boys. It's melancholy to think we have not a boy among us, and that a fine auntient race like ours should be dying away for want of male heirs" (Marriage, Vol. I, p. 83).

Pride of race indeed was the predominating emotion of the aunts. "She is a most superior woman," said Miss Jacky in discussing their elder nephew's wife, Mrs. Archibald Douglas, "though she has rather too many of her English prejudices yet to be all we could wish; but I have no doubt when she has lived a little longer among us, she will just become one of ourselves." "The foibles of the aunts all originated in what was now incurable, viz. the natural weakness of their minds with their ignorance of the world and the illiberality and prejudices of a vulgar education" (Marriage, Vol. 1., p. 102). The Aunts are both generic and Scottish: "For all their Highland manners, the ladies of Glenfern are here primarily to represent a kind of universal human smallness--a timeless provinciality" (The Scottish Novel--Francis Hart, p. 58).

Over the hill from Glenfern in a more sylvan sheltered glen is the well-kept and pretty small estate of Archibald Douglas and his wife and across the loch from them rise the turrets of Lochmarlie castle the home of the formidable Lady MacLaughlan and her grotesque little husband Sir Sampson. Lady MacLaughlan is the local bluestocking with a laboratory at the top of her house where she concocts medicines and balsams from local plants to administer to her husband; she is idolatrously revered by the Aunts but in her intellectual assurance regards most of those around her as fools. When the Aunts proudly convey this new niece and the girls on a visit to Lochmarlie, they find no lights nor welcome. Sir Sampson is surprised in his night-cap; the Lady is in 'the teach-tap' as her Highland servitor explains, presiding over the contents of a steaming kettle. With cats darting about and shadows flickering on the walls, Lady MacLaughlan assumes the stature and marble aspect of a priestess undertaking mystic rites. But her blunt amazement at the appearance of the Aunts and brusque dismissal of their expostulations soon restore the impression of the life and blood Lady MacLaughlan. The anger of Miss Jacky and the discomfiture of Miss Grizzy are complete when the Lady emphatically asserts: "Even if it had been written Tuesday, you might have had the sense to know it meant Thursday" (Marriage, Vol. I, p. 181). However, "leaving the resuscitating tincture all in the dead-thraw, Methuselem pills in their infancy" the party are led off to piece together their shattered evening in the parlor (Marriage, Vol. 1., p. 192).

Lady MacLaughlan is the local sybil consulted in all things by the aunts, the autocratic great lady of the district brooking no opposition, blunt and startling in her penetration of character, of superior intellect as well as natural wisdom and possessing no manners at all. Her opinion of ill-assorted, runaway couples is terse and to the point: "Miss McKraken has bounced off with her father's footman, I hope he will clean his knives on her."

Lady MacLaughlan might occur in any society; in this Scottish one, where eccentrics are almost the norm, her appearance from a pea-green chariot in a light-coloured large-flowered chintz "carefully drawn through the pocket-holes" accompanied by a small bundle enveloped in a military cloak "with large cocked hat and little booted leg protruding at opposite extremities" amounts to the grotesque. The reader may feel that there is something deliberately cruel, harshly satiric in the creation of such a couple; the awesome height of the lady, a turreted Cybele with her monstrous

head-gear; the minuteness of her husband with his shrunken limbs; she with her deep, well-modulated voice, terrifyingly laconic: he, shrilly chattering, but by the end of Marriage, after having enjoyed the lady's sapience, her quelling of the weak, the foolish and the muddled, one senses a certain forbearance and charity, even affection for those who claim protection. From Susan's correspondence, we gather that Lady MacLaughlan is a composite figure "I've a mind to enclose you a wee morsel of Lady MacLanghlan though I think that the dinner scene is carried too far, but I write down everything that folly suggests and leave it to reason to abridge it afterwards" (Correspondence, p. 96). Miss Clavering was "transported." There was too the lively pleasure of unmasking the victim. "Do I know the person who is the original? The dress was vastly like Mrs. Damer and the manners like Lady Frederick, tell me if you did not mean a touch at her?" (Correspondence, p. 103).

In alarm Susan almost withdrew the character in fear of being detected. That she has potentialities for portraying pathos, that there are tones of tenderness about her work is undoubted. Those two old women, Lady MacLaughlan and Aunt Grizzy, one as strong-willed as the other is weakly, good-natured, watch over the senile grotesque, the pitiful little Sampson (the ex-soldier and gallant, whose greatest combat has been with his cough) to the last. Lady MacLaughlan never flinches from facts; Aunt Grizzy in her devotion to the house of MacLaughlan is not aware of anything pathetic or ludicrous, as her nature is itself composed of these two elements. "A feminine Swift" (Academy, Vol. 56, p. 152) so a contemporary reviewer described Susan Ferrier, the Swift of Cadenus and the Journal.

At Glenfern Lady Juliana gave birth to twin daughters Adelaide, a beautiful, healty baby, and Mary, a weak, sickly one. On seeing the distaste for and neglect of Mary by her mother and the nurse, Mrs. Archibald Douglas offered to care for the child at Lochmarhe Cottage. Juliana and Henry return south again where they soon get into such debt that after the birth of a son Edward, Juliana rouses herself to appeal to her brother Lord Lindore for help. In his good-natured, indolent way Lindore takes his sister into his opulent establishment, rescues Henry from imprisonment for debt and procures a commission for him in a regiment of the line about to embark for India. Juliana refuses to accompany him and they part in violent terms for ever. Henceforth the careers of the two sisters are followed with Juliana on guard against any love-matches for her daughters.

In Scotland Mary is tenderly and intelligently reared in a well-regulated household. Mrs. Douglas can send Mary south on a visit to her Mother and sister when she is grown up, with a quiet mind, knowing that though immature, she has sense and feeling for others, is not self-indulgent but forbearing. Mary's tender sensibilities are shocked by the selfishness and coldness of her mother, still unchanged by time and untouched by experience and even more by the vicious and perverse nature of her sister. Both are supremely indifferent towards Mary. Fortunately there is Lady Emily, the vivacious cousin, worldly and cynical who saves her "kettledrums and trumpets" for Lady Juliana when she bullies Mary. It is interesting that she sounds like the young Susan Ferrier of the Correspondence and that Susan obviously wrote her part with great ease. For the first time in the novel also, the omniscient narrator (who is used in Susan's three books) moves away from the main heroine, the righteous Mary and seems almost wholeheartedly to express the

view of Emily. The qualifying "almost" must be there, however, for Susan the moralist sees to it, that however amiable Emily is, she must not be awarded with a totally suitable marriage but must settle for quite a happy one with the genial, handsome but not very intelligent Edward Douglas, her cousin, and image of his late father Henry who had perished in India.

For Mary however, there are trials and self-abnegation before she is married to the man she respects and loves, Colonel Lennox, son of a blind lady whom she has often helped, and survivor of Waterloo. When Sir Sampson MacLaughlan dies, Colonel Lennox inherits Lochmarlie estate, beloved by Mary from childhood.

Adelaide, however, reverses her mother's experience by marrying for rank and money an elderly Duke and a year later, eloping with her lover, her fashionable and elegant cousin Lord Lindore. The couple are obliged to live in France where they soon tire of each other, whereupon Adelaide invites her mother to join her opulent household. At this point Juliana, enchanted by the prospect of a foreign establishment, drops her opposition to Mary's marriage in indifference and Lady MacLaughlan advises Mary to forget Sir Sampson's and the Aunts' fierce hostility to the hereditary foe of the house of MacLaughlan. Thus Mary, fortified by her social education, learns to resist gently but firmly the unreasonable pressure of her elders, to remember that the petty foibles of people often hide their innate goodness and that it is a blessed thing to come back to the traditional pieties of home.

There are two outstanding sketches of eccentrics in Marriage that have little to do with the plot--one is historic, the other generic. Manners too give depth to the background and the illusion of reality throughout. As Mr. Archibald Douglas accompanies his niece Mary on the journey south, they visit an ancient lady, Mrs. Violet MacShake, in her airy dwelling place on the Castle Hill in Edinburgh. The apartment (with its lank haircloth chairs) in which they find this healthy nonagenarian "with the drooping, snuffy nose, long turned-up chin, small quick gray eyes and sarcastic expression" is as chill and formidable as its owner. "Although the season was advanced and the air piercing cold, the grate stood smiling in all the charms of polished steel" (Marriage, Vol. 1, p. 333). Yet whenever the reader enters the cold of the house, he feels the invigorating quality of the atmosphere, and hears the living accents of a bygone day, for Mrs. Violet MacShake speaks in vivid Scots and her tongue is biting; she enjoys seeing her victims squirm. The theme of this study is the change that has come in the manners and in the outward appearance of Edinburgh. In Mrs. Violet MacShake's life-time, "the great glowrin' new toun" has sprung up on the other side of the Nor'Loch. Young Mary suggests that there may have been improvements but the old lady rounds on her sharply. "A bony improvement or ens no, to see tyleyors and sclaters leavin' whar I mind jewks and yerls" (Marriage, Vol. 1, p. 336). "Fowk are naither born, nor kirsened, nor do they wad or dee as they used tc du--awthing's changed." "The idle cheels and dinket-oot madams prancin'" rouse her sarcasm and contempt. Gone were the days of "owthority" for the head of the house when "wife an' servants, reteeners an' childer aw trum-melt i' the presence of their head;" gone indeed were the days of "mainers" (Marriage, Vol. I, pp. 336-37).

Mrs. Violet MacShake belongs to that "singular race of excellent Scotch old ladies" whom Lord Cockburn described once and for all time in his "Memorials"--"Very resolute and indifferent about the modes and habits of the modern world but hiding under their curious outsides, sense, human affection and spirits." Mrs. MacShake's portrait is sharpened, but the kindness is there and, though poking fun at a "windlestrae" like Mary, she presents her with a pair of splendid diamond ear-rings. The whole episode is so realistic, an historic note, that in the gallery that composes Marriage this canvas comes startlingly to life, and the figure of old Mrs. Violet MacShake walks energetically out of its frame.

When the heroine Mary arrives in England for her social education, much of the verve of that bracing Northern climate leaves the tale and only Lady Emily and one other save it. During her first few days at her Mother's home, Mary had noticed "a very tall corpulent man, with a projecting front, large purple nose and a profusion of chin, who seemed to be at the winding up of a solitary but voluminous meal."

Lady Emily tells Mary that Dr. Redgill "is a sort of medical aid-de-camp of papa's;" the latter was diverted by the devoted frankness with which the Dr. pursued good food. Not a merry Pantagruel however, he concentrated on dishes with sombre relish. In Marriage he is usually pursuing a tantalizingly elusive meal and is therefore repining in melancholy frustration: his medical duties are of the most perfunctory order. Mary, ever on the look-out for good in others, found that Dr. Redgill had a high impression of the Highlands and on encouraging him further in this theme, was rewarded by the epicure's map of Scotland--Loch Fyne herring, Finnan haddo, Tay salmon, Athole whiskey were all savoured on the tongue. Indeed Dr. Redgill's respect for Mary was measured by reverence for the victuals of her country, and as she finally drove away to Scotland for her marriage--"grouse always acceptable--roebuck stuffed with heather carries well at all times" were his parting requests wafted on the winds" (Marriage, Vol. 2, p. 320).

Although both Lady MacLaughlan and Dr. Redgill are minor characters apparently developed for their eccentricity, their manners are used to further the narrative: the former introduces Mary to the Lennoxes and encourages her match with Col. Lennox as part of her individual notion of what is right despite her husband's hostility; the latter is used by Susan in a comic attack on romantic love during a debate with Lady Emily. Over the "Manuel des Amphitryons" the contest is waged, the doctor contending that "cooks not cupids hold sway over men's hearts."

In The Inheritance Susan Ferrier idolizes the Christian gentleman who is also a man of the world. Her heroine Gertrude first adores Colonel Delmour but in the end, after Delmour's death in a duel, is happily married to Mr. Lyndsey who is possessed of all the Christian virtues. "Society" is always present in the novel, however, and a cynical malice. For example, the reader must visit Mrs. St. Clair's relatives who are in a humbler sphere of life. The characters are there: the delicate and gentle Misses Black and the family of Mr. Alexander Black, with that effusion of vulgarity and pretentiousness Miss Belle Black and her fiancé, the Nabon, Major Waddell, formerly of the Honourable East India Company's Service. But best of all is Miss Ferrier's own father (Uncle Adam in the novel). "He was middle-

height, with high, stooping shoulders, sharp, cross-looking, elbows projecting far beyond his back, a somewhat stormy blue face, and little pale eyes, surmounted by shaggy white eyebrows. His ordinary head-piece, a striped woollen night-cap had been laid aside for a capacious powdered peruke with side curls, and a large queue" (The Inheritance, Vol. 1, p. 149). Gertrude ultimately prevails upon Uncle Adam, when she has become the Countess of Rossville, to make a visit to Rossville. His visit was prolonged for two reasons: one, because he could daily gaze at the portrait of his beloved Lizzie Lundie (later discovered to be Gertrude's grandmother) in the Turret-Room, made over to him for his own use, and secondly, because of his stealthy, pleasurable reading of Guy Mannering.

"Uncle Adam had been no novel reader in his younger days, and with him, as with many other excellent, but we must suppose, mistaken people, novels and mental imbecility were ideas inseparably united in his brain" (The Inheritance, Vol. II, p. 84). Susan Ferrier is paying tribute to Scott in a delightful, though indirect way, when she shows how "Uncle Adam's whole being was completely absorbed in this (to him) new creation; while, at the same time he blushed even in private at his own weakness in filling his head with such idle havers, and indeed never could have held it up again if he had been detected with a volume in his hand" (The Inheritance, Vol. II, p. 85).

Apart from the excellent strong Scots tongue of Uncle Adam, Susan Ferrier has allowed many Scotticisms to creep into passages dealing with the middle-class Scots like the Black family and Miss Pratt.

The latter is the provincial gossip--the perennial poor cousin who turns up at the most inconvenient times, as when the Earl of Rossville, ponderously dull, is expatiating on the modern improvements to his castle. His florid dignity is punctured by Miss Pratt, whose piercing busybody eyes never miss a thing. Reminiscent of Miss Bates in Jane Austen's Emma (but without her artless self-interruption), "Miss Pratt is at the very heart of the shire and gives life and energy to all the pulses in the parish; she supplied it with streams of gossip and chit-chat on others and subject of ridicule and abuse in herself." In her Susan Ferrier found her tormentor-in-chief and by the reaction of each member of the family to this pest, she amusingly reveals their different characters. On Miss Pratt's lips are constant quotations from her never-seen nephew Anthony Whyte. Uncle Adam at first regarding her as an "concommon sensible woman" changes his mind after playing backgammon with her and wonders if she is not the thing itself, "she knows ower weel to shake the dice." The Earl finds her as a force in nature, impossible to restrain and offers an excellent target for her darting attacks. Indeed it is from her that he actually received a mortal stroke. With the same startling suddenness, death smote Lord Rossville, as it had done the laird of Glenfern at his grandson's christening, and the macabre touch is not wanting here either. One snowy winter afternoon, Miss Pratt alighted--at his lordship's door from a huge hearse drawn by eight plumed horses. The shock proved too much for the Earl and after a restless night he was found next morning, a lifeless corpse. Apart from the fact that this incident is based on an actual event, there is a particular vitality about Miss Pratt's doings; she is individualized in a way that Miss Ferrier's other targets--over-motherly mothers, like Mrs. Fairbairn and perennial baby-sitting Aunts, like Becky Duguid in the chapter on "auntimony" are not.

Six years of earnest quiet composition had gone into the making of The Inheritance. Among other themes the reader learns that the beautiful heiress Gertrude must accept the ties that bind her to a legendary peasant past. Susan received acclaim on its publication in the year 1824. And to be a woman novelist was by then socially acceptable. "In a word, our notion was that a clever woman had sketched very cleverly the most prominant persons in the gallery of her own personal acquaintance, and that this being done and done so admirably, there was like to be an end of the matter. In short--Marriage was a very clever book, but this is an admirable novel" (Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. XV, June, 1824).

Taste was shifting strongly towards melodrama as with the advent of Dickens. And so in 1831 Destiny is melodramatic and somber while it still reflects some of the zest for characters who were by now dying off in a rapidly changing industrial world.

Up to 1829 Susan Ferrier's tone had been relatively unaffected by her own progress to 47 years and her father's declining health. Of course even by 1824 Mrs. Grant of Laggan had written: "There is a lady here whom I think you must know--Miss Ferrier; her father is a very old man, and she, who is not very young and has indifferent health, secludes herself almost entirely with him" (Correspondence, p. 207).

But her father died and her eyes troubled her. Sadness and resignation mark the pages of Destiny. The boisterous pleasure is waning. Pietistic moralizings mar the work. The old Scottish society is in decline. The Highlands are decaying: "chiefs content to barter the recollection of a thousand years for a few gaudy seasons of Almack's and Crockford's. The euthanasia of kilted alderman and steamboat pibrochs was reserved for Miss Ferrier" (Blackwood XXX, Sept., 1831, Noctes Ambrosianae No. LVIII).

The plot of Destiny (her next and last book) focuses on the off-stage fortunes of Ronald Malcolm ultimately a post-Captain in the Royal Navy once reported to be missing at sea who finally turns up to inherit Inch-Orran from the Glenroy branch of the feuding family. Naturally he marries Edith Glenroy with whom he has always been in love and to everyone's affectionate delight. In between times marvellous characters drawn to the life are still introduced.

The most powerful character-drawing is that of Glenroy and although Susan Ferrier gives a vivid sketch of a declining Highland chief in Glenroy and stresses the town dissipations of his successor, it is not so much to lament the fall of an ancient and honourable house, as to chastise peevish selfishness in the one, and wild excess in the other. Added to this, little education, strong racial prejudice and utter contempt for his servants and retainers, together with florid good looks and a high temper, make up the man, who seems bound very appropriately for the fate meted out to him--gout, paralysis, then utter imbecility.

The great literary creation with whom Glenroy invites comparison is Maria Edgeworth's King Corny of the Black Islands in her novel Ormond. Both men Irish and Highland have the Celtic weaknesses, love of excess in feasting and drinking (with quick anger if guests cannot keep pace), love

of bravery--six-oared boats on the loch, streamers flying and pipes playing--love of absolute authority, but King Corny had also the Celtic virtues, which Glenroy lacked, a warm heart and fidelity to friends. There is much humour of the trenchant kind in the portrait of Glenroy, but little of the fun that plays around the figure of lovable Corny of the tattered realm.

The faithful old retainer is a type made memorable and particular in Destiny in the person of delightful old Molly Macauley who shows delicacy and intuition in her dealings with her superiors. She staunchly remains with Edith through all her trials and when her fortunes are at this lowest ebb, shows no change in her attitude, save in the greater deference she pays to the chief's daughter. Her relations with Glenroy are nicely summed up in her own words: "and I thought sometimes when I was away, 'Oh,' thinks I to myself, 'I wonder what Glenroy will do for somebody to be angry with, for Benhowie's grown so deaf, poor creature, it's not worth while to be angry at him; and you're so gentle, that it would not do for him to be angry with you; but I'm sure he has a good right to be angry at me considering how kind he has always been to me.'" Yet she is not abjectly servile to her chief, but even, braving his wrath, ventures to reason with him, in his most unreasonable moments. On children especially, she lavishes her affection. Her room at the castle was "a favorite rendezvous of the children who delighted in beating upon her old spinnet, and in being allowed to daub paper, dirty their fingers, and look at cloth-clogs, calico-peacocks, tinsel grottoes, filigree figures, birds made of real dyed feathers, and all the rest of Mrs. Macauley's monstrosities" (Destiny, Vol. 1, p. 29).

Yet with all her odd notions and superstititions, she is not a monstrosity herself, but about the only eccentric in Susan Ferrier's novels who is wholly pleasing--a merry little woman who sang old Scottish songs to herself "in very blitheness of heart." She reminds us that in eighteenth century Scotland, aristocratic children in the Highlands were often left to the good-nature of servants for their happy days of pony trekking and picnics over the moors. An article in The New Yorker (November 1979) confirms that life in a Scottish castle in this century has been just as Spartan as in the old days for children. To Molly, Susan Ferrier gives the honour of the last word in the novel.

In Destiny the satirist and moralist had combined to catch the spirit of a Scotland that was passing. We can agree with Timothy Tickler, influential critic of the Noctes Ambrosianae that in spite of defects these novels are "all thick-set" with "sagacity, happy traits of nature, flashes of genuine satire, humour, sterling good sense and mature knowledge of the world."

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PIONEERS IN WOMEN'S HIGHER EDUCATION

by
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With a quiet gentleness that belied their startling ambitions, Theresa, Persis, and Mary Giles did much to advance higher education for women. They never made a public speech nor agitated for women's rights; yet, at a time when the South was suffering the poverty and bitterness left by the Civil War, and when the sisters' desire for a good education was incompatible with social attitudes, they took degrees from male Trinity College (later, Duke University) and established a college for women.

The Giles sisters received their early education at home from their father. The War and their father's subsequent death ended their plans to study at a nearby girls' school. Instead, while they were still in their teens, they began teaching in the common schools.

It was because of sixteen-year-old E.S.F. Giles, Jr. that the family moved to Trinity. Widowed Nancy Giles, in 1873, disposed of most of her Richlands, North Carolina land and her household goods, and with her son and youngest daughter, Sue, made the hundred-mile trip to enroll E.S.F., Jr. in Trinity College. Theresa, Persis, and Mary followed at the end of their teaching term.

When they arrived, their brother was completing some preparatory work and was ready to enter college as a freshman in the fall of 1874. How the sisters yearned for such learning experiences. But Southern female institutions, even when known as colleges, offered courses more suited to secondary schools. Prestigious schools like Trinity were for men only.

The standard of ideal womanhood was far less liberal in the South than it was in the North, and many Southerners viewed women's educational advancements in the North as being unfeminine. United States Congressman D.W. Aiken of South Carolina was one of the most vocal critics. During an address at the Female Seminary in Anderson, he declared,

> Possibly we are the happier people for thus limiting female education for it may prevent the cropping out of that class of strong-minded women, who by practically unsexing themselves become a bane to any society....Miss Susan B. Anthony can make a stump speech two hours long on women's rights. And hosts

> of other masculine women throughout the North are daily speaking and praying for the universality of women's suffrage, that they might become by election, ruling statesmen or stateswomen in our National Congress. Are such anomalies the result of advanced 'Female Education'? Heaven forbid!

Theresa, Persis, and Mary wanted to achieve the same educational goals being reached by women on the other side of the Mason-Dixon line, but in a manner acceptable to their Southern associates. It was heretical to think of joining their brother in the classroom, but, as Mary said, "it was painfully tantalizing to have that vast store of knowledge right where we could put our hands on it and still be unable to reach it" (Giles Papers). They couldn't resist. After much deliberating and mustering of courage, the sisters decided to apply for admission to Trinity. They, of course, were not accepted and were not even taken seriously by the College officials. But if they could not enroll as students, they could still acquire some of the knowledge they so wanted by studying their brother's books. They set about doing just that. Intending to do the work unaided, they began the exercises, problems, and assignments.

After several days of studying, the sisters realized that being deprived of classroom lectures and explanations made it almost imperative that they have someone to help them. Their young brother was much too busy with his own studies to share classroom experiences with them. They approached Trinity College professor, Lemuel Johnson, who lived near their home, for help. It may have been because enrollment was low at the College and Trinity professors were paid only a portion--often less than half--of their promised $1000 annual salaries (Raper,p.185), but whatever the reason, Professor Johnson consented to give Theresa, Persis, and Mary an hour of his time each evening after his classes at the College were over. The sisters agreed to pay him a tutoring fee. They were ecstatic at having found someone to help them. Theresa wrote to their friend, Dr. A. J. Fordham, "We told him [Professor Johnson] when we commenced we wished to take the same course that the young men do in college, that we expected to continue four years and wished to graduate" (Giles Papers).

It was no mean endeavor that Theresa, Persis, and Mary were undertaking when they began studying at Trinity. Only 107 students were enrolled in 1874, as opposed to a pre-war figure of 215, but the quality of the College remained high. According to Coulter in College Life in the Old South, there were no fundamental differences in what happened at the major Southern institutions of higher learning: University of Georgia in Athens, University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, South Carolina College in Columbia, University of Mississippi in Oxford, University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Emory College in Atlanta, Trinity College at Trinity, and Mercer University in Penfield (xii).

Since there were only six professors at Trinity College during the 1870's, it was necessary for them to be knowledgeable in more than one field. The Giles sisters referred to their tutor, Lemuel Johnson, as a

whole faculty within himself. Professor Johnson was a Latin, French, and Greek scholar with some knowledge of German and Hebrew, and according to an article in the August, 1917 Trinity Alumni Register, was the best informed man of his day. But despite his excellent qualifications in many areas, Professor Johnson decided that the Giles sisters needed additional help. He enlisted some of the other professors who, like himself, agreed to tutor the ladies in the late afternoons after college classes were over.

The sisters' educational hopes were dimmed when the Citizens' Bank in Greensboro failed, causing them to lose their meager savings. As their number of faculty tutors had increased, the women paid full tuition, sixty dollars per year, just as though they were officially enrolled in the College. They had to find a way of continuing their payments. Their mother, Nancy, was unable to assume the extra expense although she encouraged them in their bold undertaking. The only feasible solution for Theresa, Persis, and Mary was to go back to teaching. They did this, teaching four or five months out of the year throughout their remaining Trinity study (Giles Papers). The sisters had little difficulty in finding teaching jobs even though men were considered to be better teachers than women. Because women received only a quarter or half the pay received by men, taxpayers were pleased to see them employed (Woody,I, 460).

The intermittent teaching left the sisters only about seven months of the year in which to crowd ten months of college work. Mary explained, "Of course we had to study in the vacations, but there was advantage in this as the professors were generally at leisure then, and kindly taught us anything we wanted" (Watson). So, Theresa, Persis, and Mary persevered, all progressing at about the same rate with their studies.

During their senior year of work, Dr. Braxton Craven, president of the College, admitted them to his metaphysics class. That was the only class the Giles sisters ever attended with the men students. Mary remarked, "If people gossiped about our going to a male school, we were too busy to take notice of it" (Watson). Two months before the 1878 Trinity College commencement, when they hoped to be finished with their college work, and when their brother would be graduated, Mary wrote the following to Persis:

> Now about Commencement, my school will be out one day after Commencement if I do not make up for the first day of May [when a picnic was to be held for her pupils]. I believe they would be willing for me to teach Saturdays so that I might go to Commencement if I wanted to, but I see it would be impossible for me to make any preparation at all...tho' I would like to see little buddie [E.S.F.,Jr.] graduate and hear him speak (Giles Papers).

No details are available as to what happened between April, when Mary wrote the above-mentioned letter, and June, but sometime during that two-month period, the Giles sisters finished their remaining college requirements and passed the senior comprehensive examinations. Trinity Col-

lege senior examinations were known to be rigorous. It was a practice of President Craven to have questions prepared by people who had no connection with the College (Chaffin, pp.72-73). Notices of examinations were placed in the newspapers and the public was invited for the orals. There is no record as to whether the sisters participated in the orals--it was considered bad form for young Southern ladies to stand up and speak before a public audience--but whether they did or not, they were thoroughly examined on all that they had studied.

Theresa, Persis, and Mary's passing the examinations may have come as a surprise to College officials, but because they did so, Dr. Craven decided to submit the sisters' names to the Board of Trustees at the same time he submitted the names of the male degree candidates. At the June 12,1878 Board meeting, the members recommended full and regular graduation to the degree of Bachelor of Arts for the three Giles sisters.

Although Mary had said earlier that there was no time to prepare for her brother's graduation, when it became apparent that the sisters themselves would be commencement participants, they hastily began to get ready. They selected dress materials and put the family Singer sewing machine into use. E.S.F.,Jr.'s clothing for the occasion had long been purchased; in February 1878, he bought a black cloth suit for twenty-five dollars (Giles Papers).

Because word had been circulated that women were included among the degree candidates, the 1878 commencement attracted more attention than previous ones. Five newspaper reporters were present to cover the event. A reporter from the Wilmington Morning Star wrote as follows:

> At 10:30 A.M. the ministers, trustees and prominent gentlemen present were escorted upon the rostrum by the marshal. Soon after, the young gentlemen of the senior class were conducted to seats upon the rostrum. Governor Colquitt [of South Carolina] and Bishop Wightman were accompanied to their seats.... Dr. Craven then escorted three young ladies to the rostrum.

The presence on the stage of the three young ladies in elegant, lace-trimmed, black silk dresses was such an aberration that it required some explanation to the audience. As noted by the Morning Star reporter, Dr. Craven stepped forward and declared that since the Misses Giles had followed the same texts, done identical course work, and passed the same examinations as the senior men, they were as much entitled to degrees as the young men were.

It was customary for each of the graduating seniors to deliver a short address. The Giles sisters had written their commencement addresses just as the men had; however, they were not required to read them--indeed, they may not have been permitted to read them. Their addresses were read for them (Wright).

The Giles sisters' graduation from a male college was unprecedented. In cases where degrees had been obtained by other women at what had pre-

viously been male colleges (as at Oberlin), women's official enrollment automatically made such colleges coeducational. Theresa, Persis, and Mary Giles were never officially enrolled at Trinity College (Bullard,p.70).

The relief at having reached their long-standing goal was aptly expressed by Mary. She laughingly spoke of the pleasure she experienced after graduation in reading a popular novel of the day, Ginger Snaps by Fannie Fern. "It was so restful," she said, "and I didn't have to stand an examination on it" (Watson).

Habit and economic necessity permitted the sisters to remain inactive for only a short time. In the fall of 1878, they began a seven-year period of teaching in the common schools in North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee. In 1885, they moved to Greenwood, South Carolina where they founded Greenwood Female College. They operated their school until 1904 when Williamston College (later, Lander College) moved to Greenwood.

The Giles sisters' accomplishments were remarkable ones for any place or period, but it was almost miraculous to have achieved them in the South when it was experiencing the aftermath of the War and when women were severely limited by social customs. Near the end of her life when Mary was asked if she and her sisters weren't considered terribly modern and ahead of their time, she replied,

> We were very ambitious and we thought we could do anything anyone else could....I don't think the word 'modern' was coined then, but I suppose we were curiosities (Wright).

Certainly the Giles sisters were ahead of their time, yet they were not curiosities. Somehow the gentle, but determined, women managed to reconcile opposites without appearing curious. They were leaders when they appeared to be followers; they were strong when they appeared to be weak, and they were trailblazers when they appeared to be conformists. By unobtrusively challenging the perversities of their time, the Giles sisters helped to change the thinking of people around them, creating a recognized need for women's higher education.

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A COMPARISON OF THE PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATIVE MEN AND WOMEN

by
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Prior to the present Women's Movement, a review of the literature comparing the personality characteristics of highly creative women with their highly creative male counterparts was not possible. The reason, primarily, was that women were not included in the major studies. These researchers claimed that few, if any, women could be identified as highly creative.

The Personality Traits of Creative Men

From historical and biographical accounts Cattell (1963) studied the personalities of famous scientists, writers, artists, and composers; no women were included. According to Cattell, compared with men, few women had made outstanding contributions in science and the arts. He studied the personalities of these groups of creative men and compared them with the general population. Using the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF), Cattell found the scientific researchers to be withdrawn, far above average in intelligence, dominant, inhibited, more emotionally sensitive, more radical, more self-sufficient, and more introverted than the comparison group of average men. Cattell believed that the extravert had too many avenues for receiving information and, as a consequence, became too involved with trivia. Artists and literary men, when compared with research scientists, were similar in performance on the 16PF as stated above, but, in addition, they were artistic, more emotionally sensitive, and more anxious than the research scientists. Finally, Cattell concluded that there was overwhelming evidence that the creative individual was introverted.

When Roe (1953) started her famous investigation of creative scientists, she identified very few women who qualified to be included in her research project. Studying a sample of the leading scientists in this country at that time, Roe noted that they were curious, intelligent, and had a great need for independence, autonomy, and mastery of their environment. In another investigation, creative architects tended to be inventive, independent, determined, enthusiastic, and industrious (MacKinnon, 1962). Other studies in the 1950s and 1960s were in agreement with the above findings (Drevdahl, 1956; Barron, 1963; Taylor and Holland, 1964).

The Personality Traits of Creative Women

Similar to Cattell's methods of investigation of creative men, Bachtold (1980) used historical and biographical accounts to study creative women. She

found her subjects to be emotionally sensitive and independent in their thinking as well as having great powers of concentration and perseverance. In their life styles, the highly creative women were more non-conforming and withdrawn. Although these highly creative women worked for others, they did not work with others.

In an earlier investigation, creative women authors and artists responded to the 16PF (Bachtold and Werner, 1973). The researchers reported that their subjects were more aloof, intelligent, aggressive, adventurous, sensitive, imaginative, radical, self-sufficient, and less rigid than the general population. Also, the creative women were more emotional and less controlled than less creative females.

Blaubergs (1978) reviewed the literature on this topic covering the period from 1961 to 1977 and concluded that highly creative women and men had similar personality traits, as indicated above. The subjects in her study were in such fields as psychology, science, art, literature, politics, engineering, and mathematics.

Discussion

The findings of the studies of the personality characteristics of highly creative women and men were similar, yet the investigations of highly creative women were not replications of the major studies of highly creative men. Although the women were designated as highly creative, it cannot be determined from the studies and, therefore, cannot be assumed that the women were comparable to the men in creative abilities. The conclusion, therefore, that highly creative women have similar personality traits to those of their male counterparts can only be tentative.

There are, however, other questions which may be raised about the personality characteristics of highly creative women. Studies which compare highly creative women with their male counterparts may be using the creative men as a model. While this approach may be useful, it may also be biased. The male model approach may not fully investigate the personality characteristics of highly creative women since it does not consider traits which may be idiosyncratic to gifted women.

Are the highly creative women withdrawn because of the nature of the creative process as indicated by Bachtold (1980), or is it due, or partly so, to rejection from their less creative and, therefore, less successful peers? At the present time, there is a large body of literature concerned with women not achieving according to their potential because they fear success. Sassen (1980), alternatively, argues that it is the competitive environment which produces the anxiety in women rather than the fear of success itself. Have the creative women, therefore, adjusted by being more withdrawn? If so, is it due to their failure to live according to the sex-role expectations of society? In our society, highly creative and successful men are admired while the female counterparts may be perceived as deviants of cultural stereotypes of the different roles expected of men and women.

In conclusion, there is some evidence to indicate that highly creative

women have similar personality traits when compared with their male counterparts. There may be, however, societal influences which may produce additional personality characteristics unique to highly creative women.

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Report on the Fall Conference in Athens

by
Ernest Johansson

More than 125 teachers of English and language arts at all levels gathered at Baker Center of Ohio University on Saturday, September 26, for workshops and addresses on grading and related matters, for a conference titled, Making the Grade: Evaluation and Grading in School and College. There was a morning address by Karolyn Burkett on "Evaluating the Curriculum," followed by ten repeated workshop sessions treating evaluation and grading from elementary to college level English and language arts. In his luncheon address, Dr. Allen Myers, Dean of the College of Education, Ohio University, ranged over a variety of issues of central and immediate concern in his address titled, "In Triumph Be Generous." A major part of his message concerned what he considers to be the two most important benefits to English Language Arts instruction in Ohio in the past several decades -- Teacher Education Redesign and the recommendations contained in the report by the Advisory Commission on Articulation Between Colleges and Schools. The commission was a joint committee of the Ohio Board of Regents and the State Board of Education. It was a precedent-setting joint effort, one of the few times in the history of Ohio that these two agencies have worked together. It was an address filled with good humor and hope, one which augured well for the future of our profession in the eighties.

In "Evaluating the Curriculum" Karolyn Burkett explained a new process of curriculum development and evaluation which has been developed and instituted by the Newark City Schools. Those working with the process have established thirteen curriculum development committees to deal with all areas of the district curriculum. After she explained how the whole system works, Ms Burkett detailed the process followed by the Language Arts Curriculum Development Committee in developing a graded course of study K-12. The process includes reading lists on the language curriculum evaluation procedures for the present language program (including tools developed locally and those procured from other sources), application of the Process Model developed by the State Department of Education for writing a graded course of study, and a method and form for the evaluation and adoption of language textbooks by teachers.

Marion Kurner shared our concern for problems with instruction in grammar and punctuation, oral communication, and creative and expository writing at the elementary level. On the one hand she noted that the schools must contend with the effects of television on the young mind, especially since television clearly appears to stifle imagination and also develop passive attitudes toward the reception of information without any participation from the receiver. On the other hand, our children have also been taught extensively by ditto masters and workbooks, thus developing the impression that one-word answers are sufficient. Furthermore, she made plain, we now see the results of the "relevance" period of the late sixties and early seventies, when proper grammar and attention to basic formal essentials were not considered important. Such deficiencies in our language arts curriculum can be remedied when we acknowledge them and adjust our classroom procedures to meet the condition.

Norma C. Loew, in discussing "The Evaluation of the Learning Disabled Child," stressed that perhaps no other group of children are more closely scrutinized and "graded" than are our LD children. She indicated that the requirements of PL94-142 mandate that certain evaluation procedures must take place so that an individualized education program (IEP) can be developed for every handicapped child, placing him/her in the least restrictive environment.

Jan Thompson, speaking on "Grading in a Phased Curriculum" stressed the rationale, structure, course outline, and psychological factors involved in ability-grouped learning at the high school level. As she made plain, phases are the basis for establishing a learning environment in which each student may progress at an appropriate level, surrounded by other students whose abilities and goals resemble his/her own. Each phase is structured and defined by content guidelines, course objectives, and expectations. Students, teachers, and counselors work together in determining the proper initial phase placement as well as subsequent changes in phase. Inherent in the phasing system are certain factors affecting the evaluation and grading of a student's achievement--including the automatic narrowing of the spectrum through homogeneous grouping and the exchange of evaluative ideas among "team" teachers.

In a presentation titled, "Lightening the Paper Load" Norma Nutter offered techniques to reduce the English/language arts teacher's heavy paper load, allowing her to evaluate student writing while maintaining, or even increasing the amount of writing students do. The techniques she advocates are those that promote student fluency in writing, self-editing skills, and a personal accountability for writing. More specifically, she encouraged journal writing, various methods for peer-, self-, group-editing; she also suggested revision cycles, short assignments, and using the teacher as a writing resource.

Ardeth Deay responded to both sides of the student teacher--cooperating teacher interaction in addressing "Conferencing Techniques for Evaluating Student Teachers." Her presentation stressed the role of the cooperating teacher in establishing guidelines for appropriate communication with student teachers, where she reviewed techniques and criteria for evaluating student teachers; she gave special attention to the typical problems encountered in such situations. At the same time, aware that many attending her sessions were student teachers, she shifted focus to provide a view of the evaluation techniques as they apply to student teachers.

"Students tend to write in the manner in which they believe their writing will be evaluated," affirmed Pat Gilbert, in a presentation on "Holistic Grading and Student Writing." Since students tend to write for the teacher as examiner or evaluator, the student will internalize the need for using the skills necessary to complete the assignment. It is necessary, then, to look at the assignment as a whole, at the skills which will produce the best answer to that assignment. Matching the scoring guide to the assignment in advance of the writing helps the student become more specific and more selective about writing. Expanding pre-writing time with talk about the subject, and about effective ways of presentation should result in a more effective piece of writing. Evolving an evaluation scale with the class involves students in the process, thus making them more inclined to be self-evaluators, thus more effective writers.

Though content with what some might consider a prosaic title, David Bergdahl in "Grading Freshman Essays" took elements of Peter Elbow's feedback generating guidelines and the end-note writing technique taught at Rice University to present a grading scheme with these variables: the merit of the thesis, its development, the structure of the argument, and the maturity of the prose. Those present graded a sample paper and as time permitted each graded a freshman essay on his own.

But Anita Gandolfo was not content with a prosaic title, as "What Color are Huck Finn's Eyes: Evaluating Evaluations of Student Writing About Literature" plainly attests. She asked her workshop group to respond to three basic questions about student writing as a basis for her dicsussion of evaluation: What do I require students to write? When do I require them to write? Why do I require them to write? Moving from a discussion of responses to these questions, she explained the evaluation process she has developed for literature classes, working centrally with the provoked and developed student questions about the work read and studied. She emphasized the evaluation is not the same as letter grading. Student writing should allow the instructor to evaluate student perceptions. Reading and writing should not be a power struggle. Once the student develops an ability to pose questions about the works he reads, his study and analysis becomes independent.

Although June Berkley was reluctant to discuss the source of her title, "Beyond the Grade: What Do You Say After You Write C+?" she did remind us that neither writing nor writers are ever finished products, nor is student intelligence or experience necessarily fixed. Sensitivity and awareness are also beyond the teacher's control. We must be careful about assignments, clear and defined in goals and schedules. When we write back to students, we should be aware of setting a model for them. We should speak in their language and remember that the quality of this feedback is vital to improvement. Above all we should be specific in making suggestions to the student, in exploring the potential of the paper.

In a special workshop James Davis discussed approaches to "Writing Articles for Focus." He surveyed his choice of themes and topics for the journal, his attempt to balance invited and specifically solicited articles, and the specific utility he sees in a publication such as FOCUS. He wants FOCUS to offer teachers short articles reflecting good sense and analyzed experience on contemporary issues in learning, especially as they affect teachers in English and the language arts. He does not necessarily seek the extended scholarly and analytic essay; rather he feels a reader of FOCUS can most use something for the classroom, something written by another teacher or an expert who can set up the sense of a complex issue in plain terms. Although he finds it difficult to get teachers in the area to contribute more than they have, he is hopeful that this kind of workshop may encourage the timid and reluctant.

FEMINIST CRITICISM AND FEMINIST CREATIVITY CONFERENCE

Ohio University
March 4-6, 1982

A conference celebrating Feminist Criticism and Feminist Creativity will be held in Athens, Ohio, March 4-6, 1982. Featured speakers will be Marge Piercy, Toni Cade Bambara, and Carolyn Heilbrun. The conference, sponsored by Ohio University and NCWSA and organized by the Ohio University Women's Studies Program, will include readings, lectures, panels on such topics as feminist literary theory, minority women writers, and Appalachian women, as well as a symposium on the future of feminist studies and feminist art with Piercy, Bambara, and Heilbrun.

Marge Piercy, one of the best known writers of both fiction and poetry to have emerged with the reawakened women's movement, will open the conference with a reading from her own work. A political activist from the days of the civil rights movement on, Piercy has, with her persistent and visionary expression of women's consciousness, altered the way many of us perceive the world. Author of six books of fiction and as many of poetry, she has contributed to the creation of a new women's mythology in her poetic works The Twelve-Spoked Wheel and The Moon Is Always Female. Her fiction includes Small Changes and Woman on the Edge of Time.

Reading from her own work on Friday night will be short story writer, essayist, reviewer, and recently acclaimed novelist, Toni Cade Bambara. From a perspective that is consciously both Black and female, Bambara has created strong, independent women characters whose individual lives are inevitably political and communal because they must contend with the emotional undertoe of a racist and sexist society that fantasizes stereotypes even where it does not enforce them. Her works include The Sea Birds Are Still Alive, her second short story collection, and a novel The Salt Eaters.

Closing the conference will be Carolyn Heilbrun, a writer with a dual signature. As Amanda Cross, she is known to mystery fans for her clever, intellectual spoofs of academia (Poetic Justice, Death in a Tenured Position), and for her feminist sleuth, Professor Kate Fansler. As literary critic and scholar, Heilbrun has explored "the hidden river of androgyny," a current that she finds in much of the world's great literature. Her works include Toward A Recognition of Androgyny and Reinventing Womanhood.

During the conference the NCWSA Council and caucuses will also have an opportunity to meet.

Students are encouraged to attend. Up to two hours of Ohio University English/Women's Studies credit, either graduate or undergraduate, may be received in connection with the conference. A limited number of free rooms will be available for women of low income. Childcare will be available.

For further information, contact Marilyn Atlas, Women's Studies Director, Wilson Hall, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio 45701.

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

SUMMER PROGRAM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS

THE CITY AND LITERATURE

AT THE RUTGERS NEW BRUNSWICK CAMPUS

JUNE 28 -- JULY 23, 1982

A THREE CREDIT PROGRAM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH: LECTURES, WORKSHOPS, FIELD TRIPS, DISCUSSIONS WITH SUCH PROMINENT AUTHORS AND EDUCATORS AS ALFRED KAZIN, KENNETH KOCH, NICHOLASA MOHR, WALTER DEAN MYERS, RICHARD WESLEY, CHARLOTTE BROOKS, DOROTHY STRICKLAND, M. JERRY WEISS, AND OTHERS. (INCLUDING NIKKI GIOVANNI).

TUITION AND LODGING ARE FREE TO ACCEPTED PARTICIPANTS.

PARTICIPATING TEACHERS WILL HAVE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THE SUBJECT OF THE CITY AND LITERATURE, TO SHAPE AND IMPLEMENT A MODEL (CORE) CURRICULUM IN THE SUBJECT, AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DESIGN OF A RELATED TEACHER'S MANUAL FOR USE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH COURSES.

THE PROGRAM WILL BE GIVEN AT THE NEW BRUNSWICK CAMPUS OF RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY 15, 1982, BUT SHOULD BE FILED EARLY, AS THE NUMBER OF PLACES IS LIMITED.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND APPLICATION FORMS, WRITE:

C.L.U.E. (The Conference on Literature and the Urban Experience)
Department of English
Rutgers, The State University
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Telephone: (201) 648-5820

The formal application will require a letter from the school principal or department chairperson endorsing the applicant's candidacy and affirming the school's commitment to use some part of the model curriculum in the 1982-83 academic year.

This project has been funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, a Federal Agency established by Congress.